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Usool Al Hadith

Methodology of Understanding Hadith

This booklet presents useful articles related to usool and sciences of hadith. It is recommended to read these in conjunction with a book of usool. May Allah make it beneficial for us and forgive any mistakes that we do.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARTICLE 1:	3
The Preservation of Hadith Over the Generations	3
The Concern of the Companions for Conveying the Hadiths	5
The Beginnings of Criticism of the Narrators (<i>Al-Jarh Wat-Ta'dil</i>)	6
Travelling to Gather Hadith	7
ARTICLE 2	17
Introduction to Sunnah	17
Chapter 1 - Revelation Besides the <i>Qur'an</i>	17
Chapter 2 - Significance of the <i>Sunnah</i>	21
Article 3:	27
On The Importance of Knowing Men	27
Article 4:	30
Importance of knowing the narrators of Hadeeth	30
Article 5:	33
The Concept of Tawaatur	33
Article 6	38
The effects of using weak Hadeeth	38
Article 7:	42
Authenticity of Hadith	42
Article 8:	47
Sunnah – The Second Source of Legislation	47
Article 9:	51
The Science Of Hadith	51
Components Of Hadith	52
Article 9:	57
Imam al-Bukhari and the Science of Hadith	57
Al-Bukhari's Early Life	57
Sahih al-Bukhari	58
Imam al-Bukhari's Fiqh	59

ARTICLE 1:

The Preservation of Hadith Over the Generations

Source: <http://islamicsciences.wordpress.com/>

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

A Brief Overview of the History of Ḥadīth Literature from the Age of the Companions until the Present Day^[1]

The Scholars of the Ummah, from the time of the Companions until the present day, have taken great care to preserve and convey the Sunnah of Allāh's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم). In every age, as new challenges appeared, sincere scholars arose who met those challenges. It is not possible to do justice to this broad topic in a short amount of time and this is by no means to be taken as a thorough discussion of the topic, but rather, it should be regarded merely as what it is: a brief overview.

The Great Effort of the Companions (رضوان الله عليهم) to Learn the Sunnah

The Companions used to give great concern to sitting with the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) to hear his ḥadīths and learning from him as much as possible. Of course, while some of them were independently wealthy and were able to devote themselves entirely to learning from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), others had to work in order to meet their needs. However, they would not let this prevent them from learning from Allāh's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم). For this reason we find, for example, that 'Umar made an arrangement with an Anṣarī neighbor of his. Each of them would take turns sitting with the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) on alternating days, and then he would return and relate to the other all that he had missed that day as has been mentioned in a long ḥadīth in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Still, other Companions were young and unmarried, having few worldly obligations, allowing them to devote their time to learning from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم); at the head of them was Abū Hurayrah.

Writing of Ḥadīth During the Lifetime of Allāh's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم)

Muslim reports in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* through the route of Hammām from Zayd ibn Aslam from Aṭā' ibn Yasār: from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī that Allāh's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, **“Do not write from me, and whoever has written from me other than the Qur'an, then let him erase it.”**

Although this ḥadīth is in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, it is one of the few ḥadīths of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* which was criticized by some of the scholars of ḥadīth. While it has come from this particular route from Abū Saʿīd from the statement of Allāh's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم), Abū Naḍrah and Abū al-Mutawakkil have narrated it from Abū Saʿīd in *manqūf* form from the words of Abū Saʿīd himself. Al-Bukhārī[2] and Abū Dawūd[3] both chose the opinion that this is the correct version of this ḥadīth. Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī mentioned this opinion without making a decisive conclusion as to which is correct.[4] The opinion chosen by al-Bukhārī and Abū Dawūd seems to be correct, and Allāh knows best.

However, even if this ḥadīth is authentic, then it should be regarded as abrogated. A number of scholars have stated that the wisdom behind this prohibition was so that the Qur'ān would not get confused with other than it when the revelation was still new and the Companions were still new to Islam. However, later, when that was no longer feared, the prohibition was lifted.

This is based on a number of authentic ḥadīths that show the permission of writing.

Al-Bukhārī and Abū Dāwūd report that on the day of the Conquest of Makkah, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) delivered a sermon. A man from Yemen called Abū Shāh asked the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) to have that sermon written for him so the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) ordered that a copy of that sermon be written for Abū Shāh.

Abū Dawūd also reports with a *ṣaḥīḥ isnād* that 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ used to write down everything he would hear from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) that he desired to preserve or to memorize, so some of the Companions prohibited him saying, “He is a human being, he speaks when he is pleased and when he is angry.” Consequently, 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr refrained from writing until he mentioned this to Allāh's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Allāh's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) pointed to his mouth and said, **“Write, for by the one in whose hand is my soul, nothing comes forth from it except for the truth.”**

It is for this reason that Abū Hurayrah said, **“There is no one from the Companions of Allāh's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) with more ḥadīths from Allāh's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) than me, except for 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr, for he used to write, and I did not write.”** [Al-Bukhārī and Abū Dāwūd]

This statement may seem problematic as there is no doubt that many more ḥadīths have been recorded in the books of ḥadīth from Abū Hurayrah than from 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr. However,

this is due to a number of causes. Abū Hurayrah devoted himself to teaching, giving fatāwā, and narrating ḥadīth, while ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr used to perform a great deal of worship by day and night – prayer, recitation of Qur’an, and fasting – which would have occupied most of his time. Furthermore, Abū Hurayrah lived in al-Madinah while ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr accompanied the armies that conquered Syria and Egypt and eventually took Egypt as his place of residence. In that time period, many of the Ṭābi‘īn would travel to Madinah to hear ḥadīths while that was not necessarily the case with other cities. In fact, according to al-Bukhārī, in *at-Tārikh al-Kabir*, over 800 of the Ṭābi‘īn heard ḥadīths from Abū Hurayrah, and there was no one else from the Companions who had anywhere near that number of students.

The Concern of the Companions for Conveying the Ḥadīths

A number of Companions who were young in the lifetime of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) devoted themselves to attaining knowledge and then passed it on to the following generations. There can be no doubt that this is a result of the *tarbiyyah* that they received from Allāh’s Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم), the greatest of teachers and guides. **“And the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad.”**

One of the many statements of Allāh’s Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) encouraging attainment of knowledge is the ḥadīth **“Whoever takes a path seeking knowledge, Allāh makes easy for him a path to Paradise.”** [Muslim]

He (صلى الله عليه وسلم) did not just encourage them to learn the Sunnah, but to pass it on as well, as he said, **“May Allāh brighten the face of the person who hears what I say and retains it, then convey it to others.”** [Aḥmad, Abū Dawud, ibn Mājah, and at-Tirmidhī who said, “*Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ*.”]

He also warned against lying upon him, saying **“Whoever lies against me intentionally, then let him take his seat in the Hell-Fire.”** [Al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and many others]

This ḥadīth has been narrated from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) by over fifty Companions, which is an indication of the great effect that this severe warning had on this great generation as there are few ḥadīths that were narrated by as many Companions as this ḥadīth.

As a result, after Allāh’s Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) died, the Companions used to take great caution in narrating ḥadīths. When ‘Umar was the Khalīfah, he would threaten those who who narrated ḥadīths that he did not recognize to bring a witness for their ḥadīth, otherwise he would have them beaten. This was not because he doubted their trustworthiness, but it was to exercise great caution to verify every aspect of the Sunnah so that it would be protected from error entering into it.

Some narrators who lived long after the Prophet (ﷺ) and were able to narrate many ḥadīths are Abū Hurayrah, ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, Anas ibn Mālīk, and ‘Ā’ishah bint Abī Bakr, may Allāh be pleased with all of them.

There were others among the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) who narrated ḥadīths from him such as Umm Salamah, but ‘Ā’isha, may Allāh be pleased with her, narrated the most out of any of the female Companions. This is perhaps part of the wisdom in making ‘Ā’ishah the wife of the Prophet (ﷺ). She was shown to him as his wife in a dream, and so it was that Allāh showed him that he should marry her. He married her when she was six years old and she came to his house at the age of nine – and we know that memory is best at young age and can retain better. She was exceptionally bright and lived for over 40 years after the death of the Prophet (ﷺ) and she had many students. Being in the house of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), she saw what others did not see and heard that which others did not hear, and thus, she was able to preserve and convey very important aspects of the Sunnah. This is a sufficient sign that Allāh is the one ensuring the preservation of the Sunnah as it was by His Revelation to Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) that ‘Ā’ishah was in a position to play this essential role in the preservation of our religion.

Some other Companions who narrate a great number of ḥadīths are ibn ‘Abbās, Jarīr ibn ‘Abdillāh, and Abū Sa’id al-Khudri. Keep in mind, this is not intended as a comprehensive list. Then, in the generation of the Tābi’īn, a number of important developments were made. The writing of ḥadīth increased, and whoever desires to know more concerning this should refer to Shaykh Azami’s book, *Studies in Early Ḥadīth Literature*, which he wrote as his doctoral thesis.

The Beginnings of Criticism of the Narrators (*Al-Jarḥ Wat-Ta’dīl*)

In the time of the Companions, there was no question of the trustworthiness and precision of the narrators of ḥadīths as the Companions heard directly from the Prophet (ﷺ) and then took great caution in conveying what they heard. However, in the time of the Tabi’īn, the issue of narrators making errors or not being trustworthy began to appear for the first time. So it was that the scholars of ḥadīth developed what has come to be known as the science of *al-Jarḥ wat-Ta’dīl*. This is the science of examining the narrations of different narrators to make a determination about their reliability. This science developed gradually and expanded as the need grew.

Perhaps the first scholar to truly devote himself to this – that is, critique of the narrators – was a scholar from the senior *Atbā’ at-Tābi’īn*, Shu’bah ibn al-Ḥajjāj (died in 160 H). Amongst his

students who took this knowledge from him were ‘Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī (135-198 H) and Yaḥyā ibn Sa’īd al-Qaṭṭān (120-198 H).

Then this knowledge passed to their students from the generation after the *Atbā’ at-Tābi’īn*, at the head of them: Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (164-241 H), Yaḥyā ibn Ma’īn (158-233 H), and ‘Alī ibn al-Madīnī (161-235 H). Then their students took it from them.

The students of these scholars would write their statements about narrators and gather them together, however, there were no scholars who authored books on this subject until the coming of Imām Muḥammad ibn Isma’īl al-Bukhārī (194-256 H). He was a student of ‘Alī ibn al-Madīnī. He wrote his tremendous book, *at-Tārikḥ al-Kabīr*. Had he not written any other work, this one would have been sufficient to secure his position as an Imām in the field of ḥadīth, and he was just twenty years old when he wrote it! All the works written in this field after it are dependant upon it. After him, the scholars followed this *sunnaḥ hasanaḥ*, devoting many books to the biography and critique of the narrators of ḥadīth, and all of them were dependant in great part on the work of al-Bukhari.

Travelling to Gather Ḥadīth

It has already been mentioned that many of the scholars from the Tābi’īn travelled to Madīnah to hear ḥadīth. In fact, this practice started with the Companions themselves. Some of them would travel to other cities to meet other Companions just for the purpose of confirming ḥadīths they had heard from Allāh’s Messenger. However, it was in the time of the Atbā’ at-Tābi’īn that the scholars started to do a great deal of traveling for the purpose of seeking ḥadīth. Perhaps the most important of the scholars who set this example was Ma’mar ibn Rāshid al-Azdī (96-154 H). Imām Aḥmad said concerning him that he sought knowledge more than anyone else in his time and he also said concerning him that he was the first one to journey – meaning: he was the first to travel to many lands and spend years in travel through various lands to hear ḥadīths.[5]

The reason for this travelling to different lands was in order to hear more ḥadīth, because the Companions had spread to the various Islamic lands after the Conquests that took place in their time in order to teach the people Islam, so you would find some ḥadīths were known in one land but not in another or vice versa. So travelling for the purpose of gathering ḥadīth gradually increased until the time of the Imām Aḥmad and his generation came and it was the established practice. Imām Aḥmad did not marry until he was forty years old because all of his time and effort was devoted to travelling to seek ḥadīth. Such was the case with many of the scholars.

The Writing of Ḥadīth Books

The practice of writing books of ḥadīth concerning certain topics started all the way in the first century of the Hijrah, but these books were usually small books about various topics. As was mentioned before, writing of ḥadīths started in the time of the Companions but in the beginning, their writings were more like personal notebooks than books that are authored for people to read and study. Their purpose was to serve as records of the ḥadīths a person had learned and wished to preserve and memorize.

As time progressed, more comprehensive books were written. We will only discuss certain select important books. Many important developments have been left out in order to keep this discussion brief. Those who want to know more about the books of ḥadīth should see *Studies in Early Hadith Literature* as well as *Studies in Hadith Methodology and Literature*, both by Dr. Azami.[6] Amongst those books is:

Muwatta’ of Imām Malik (93-179 H)

- n It is the first important book of ḥadīth that has been passed down to our time.
- n His student ash-Shāfi’ī said that his is the most authentic book after the book of Allāh (this was before al-Bukhārī and Muslim’s books were compiled)
- n Along with Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, it is the book which has the most commentaries, which is an indication of the great importance that scholars have given this book.
- n It is organized by chapters devoted to *fiqh*. It is a reference point for the *fiqh* of Imām Mālik, which is one of the reasons it has been given so much importance.
- n It contains mostly ḥadīths from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), but there are also many narrations of statements of scholars from the Companions and the Tābi’īn of Madīnah. Imām Mālik was from al-Madīnah and did not travel much to learn the ḥadīths of the scholars outside the Ḥijāz.
- n His book is typical of the books that were written by the scholars of his time, in that they covered a number of *fiqh* topics while still being brief.

Al-Muṣannaf of Abdur-Razzāq aṣ-Ṣan’ānī (126-211 H)

- n He was a student of Ma’mar ibn Rāshid.
- n His is a very large and comprehensive book devoted to gathering together ḥadīths from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) as well as narrations from the scholars of the Companions and the Tābi’īn.
- n It is also devoted mostly to *fiqh* topics

Al-Musnad of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (154 – 241 H)

- n His book is one of the greatest if not the greatest ḥadīth book ever written!
- n It contains approximately 28,000 ḥadīths.

- n He said to his son Abdullāh, describing the purpose of this book, “I wrote this book to be an Imām (i.e. a guide and a reference point) for the Muslims, so whenever they disagree about the ḥadīths of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) they can refer to it...”
- n Not everything in al-Musnad is authentic. Many of the ḥadīths in it were criticized by Aḥmad himself. It was his wish to put in it all the ḥadīths that were *mash-hoor* (i.e. popular/well known, not necessarily ṣaḥīḥ), because sometimes the opinions of the scholars may vary about what is authentic.
- n It is a tremendous reference. His statement about the purpose of the book indicates that he wanted to encompass all of the Sunnah. This does not mean that every ḥadīth that is authentic is in his Musnad. However, it is highly unlikely that you will find any authentic ḥadīth for which there is not a similar ḥadīth in the ḥadīths of al-Musnad.
- n Many scholars from his contemporaries wrote Musnads. The purpose was to encompass all that had been narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) and preserve it.
- n The Musnad books were organized according to the Companion who was narrating ḥadīths. So for example, Imām Aḥmad’s work begins with the ḥadīths of Abū Bakr, then ‘Umar, then ‘Uthmān, then ‘Alī, until all of the Companions have been covered.

***Al-Jāmi’ as-Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Imām al-Bukhārī (194-256 H)**

- n We will *in shā Allāh* be discussing his book in great detail next week
- n His book was the first book that was compiled with intention to bring together ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīths only.
- n It was not his intent to encompass **all** the authentic ḥadīths.
- n He wrote it at the suggestion of his shaykh, Iṣḥāq ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ḥanzalī, more popularly known as Iṣḥāq ibn Rāhūyah or Iṣḥāq ibn Rāhawayh.

***Aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ* of Imām Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim ibn Ḥajjāj (204-262 H)**

- n He was the student of al-Bukhārī
- n He followed his example in writing a book devoted to authentic ḥadīths
- n Both his book and the book of Imām al-Bukhari are organized by chapters. They gather together the chapters of *fiqh* as well as other topics such as *Imān*, *Zuhd*, etc.

***Al-Jāmi’* of at-Tirmidhī (279 H)**

- n His book is more popularly known as *Sunan at-Tirmidhī*.
- n The organization of his book is similar to the previous two books.
- n He was perhaps the most devoted of all of Imām al-Bukhārī’s students.
- n In terms of topics covered, his book is similar to the previous book.

- n In addition to gathering together ḥadīths, he also mentions the *fiqh* of the *Salaf* – the scholars of *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* – concerning the topics touched upon in his book.
- n Furthermore, he grades the ḥadīths.
- n Some later scholars have said that he is *mutasābil* (i.e. he was lax in authenticating ḥadīths that are not authentic). It seems that this may partly be based on misunderstandings of his terminology on the part of those who made these claims. Later scholars use the term *ḥasan* to mean that ḥadīth is from the second level of authentic ḥadīths. However, one who studies the terminology of at-Tirmidhī will find that he uses the term *ḥasan* *ṣaḥīḥ* for ḥadīths he regards as authentic, and that he uses the term *ḥasan* to indicate other factors related to science of the ḥadīth, and this is not the place to clarify that.
- n He discusses his methodology that he used in writing his book in *al-ʿIlal as-Saghīr* which is included at the end of his *al-Jāmiʿ*.

As-Sunan of Imām Abū Dāwūd (died 275)

- n He was one of the closest students of Imām Aḥmad
- n He wrote a letter describing the methodology he used in writing his *Sunan* which I have translated and it should be referred to for more information about his *Sunan*.

As-Sunan of An-Nasāʾī (215 – 303 H)

- n He has two books: *As-Sunan Al-Kubrā* and *As-Sunan Al-Mujtabā*. The second is summarized from the first and it is half its size. It is the one that is popularly referred to as *Sunan an-Nasāʾī* or *as-Sunan as-Ṣuḡhrā*.
- n Imām an-Nasāʾī devotes a great deal of effort to mentioning various routes of certain ḥadīths to clarify the mistakes of narrators and it is a tremendous reference for that.
- n Some scholars even said he was more knowledgeable than Imām Muslim (concerning sciences of ḥadīth).

The third century (200's H) was the Golden Age for the Sciences of Ḥadīth. After that, decline began. There were many scholars who came in the 300's such as Ibn Khuzaymah, ibn Ḥibbān, al-Ḥākim. Each of them wrote books for the purpose of gathering authentic ḥadīths only.

However, they were lax in grading ḥadīths, *ṣaḥīḥ*.

In this period of decline, the understanding of the sciences of *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* declined as people began entering more and more into *ʿIlm al-Kalām* and turning away from the beneficial knowledge of the *Salaf*.

As a result scholars eventually became forced to write books about *ʿUlūm al-Ḥadīth* because the students of ḥadīth themselves were starting to get mixed up concerning matters that were

important for them to know. Some important books written in this time were *Ma'rifah 'Ulum al-Hadith* by al-Hākim and *al-Muhaddith al-Fāsil* of ar-Rāmahurmuzī.

Also, Imām al-Khaṭṭabī (388 H) wrote the first commentaries on ḥadīth books in this time period, *Ma'ālim as-Sunan*, which is a commentary on *Sunan Abi Dawūd*, and then he authored *A'lām al-Hadith*, popularly known as *A'lām as-Sunan*, a commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. He mentioned in his introduction to *Ma'ālim as-Sunan* the reason for writing his book. The reason was that he found in his time that the people of ḥadīth devoted their time to gathering ḥadīth for the purpose of competing with one another so they focused on gathering *gharīb* (strange) ḥadīths that their peers did not have. Typically, the reason for the strangeness would be that they weak narrations coming from the mistakes of narrators, and hence no one would have them except for those who heard them from those narrators. This is in contrast to the authentic *ḥadīths* which were well-known and in wide circulation. They became so occupied with this that they started to neglect that which was most important – being able to distinguish between *ṣaḥīḥ* and *da'īf*. This also lead them to neglect the importance of understanding the ḥadīths and applying their knowledge. On the other hand, there were the people of *fiqh* who were not concerned with gathering ḥadīths to begin with, so they knew only a few ḥadīths and their effort was devoted to debating issues of *fiqh* based on argumentation, not based on knowledge of the Sunnah.

So he saw for the first time there was a need for commentaries explaining the Prophetic Hadiths whereas the previous generations learned the ḥadīths and their *fiqh* directly from their shaykhs as they travelled seeking ḥadīths. However, due to the decline of knowledge, he saw a need for a book to aid the students in learning the *fiqh* of ḥadīths due to their ignorance concerning it. In this time period, *'ilm al-kalām* – which has its origins in the philosophy of the Greeks such as Aristotle – started to spread and influence people's knowledge and understanding. The Mu'tazilah had started spreading their *'aqidah* which was based on logic and argumentation, not Qur'an and Sunnah (i.e. *'ilm al-kalam*).

In the previous generation, the generation of Imām ash-Shafi'ī, Aḥmad and the followers of scholars like them, the scholars of *Ahl al-Hadith* did not enter into *'Ilm al-Kalām* at all.

However, in this century, when the knowledge of *Ahl al-Hadith* concerning their own field became weak, they started to turn to *'Ilm al-Kalām* to respond to the Mu'tazilah. So you find in this time the Ash'ari and Maturidi *madh-habs* started to spread amongst *Ahl al-Hadith*. The basis of both these *madh-habs* was in the writings of ibn Kullāb. He was a contemporary of Imām Aḥmad who declared him an innovator because of his involvement in *'ilm al-kalām*. Yet, in the

century following that of Imām Aḥmad, many scholars began following the way of ibn Kullāb! So it was that *‘ilm al-kalām* began to effect all the Islamic sciences, including, *‘ulum al-ḥadīth*. There was another way in which *‘ilm al-kalām* influenced *‘ulum al-ḥadīth*: through *uṣul al-fiqh*. The people of *kalām* started to enter things into the field of *uṣul al-fiqh* that were not from the way of the *Salaf*. And some of those alien concepts were entered into the sciences of ḥadīth.

Al-Ḥafīẓ ad-Dāraqūṭnī (385 H)

n He was the last of the great early scholars of ḥadīth.

n He was from the few people of his time who stayed away from *‘ilm al-kalām*, but as al-Ḥafīẓ adh-Dhahabī said, “But rather, he was a *Salafī*.” Meaning: he followed the way of the *Salaf*. This is true not just of his *‘aqīdah*, but his approach to the sciences of ḥadīth.

After him there came many other great ḥadīth scholars such as al-Bayhaqī, but none of them were of the same level as the likes of an-Nasāʾī, al-Bukhārī, ibn al-Madīnī and other early scholars!

For that reason, those early scholars of ḥadīth must be taken as the point of reference.

Imām ibn aṣ-Ṣalāḥ (643 H)

n He wrote a book concerning *‘ulum al-ḥadīth* which became the foundation for all such books written after him.

n While it is an excellent and influential book, it contains certain fundamental methodological errors as ibn aṣ-Ṣalāḥ was influenced indirectly by *‘ilm al-kalām* through the influence of *uṣul al-fiqh*.

n So this influenced all the scholars who came after him, and subsequent generations were not as knowledgably as generations of the *Salaf*.

There were still tremendous scholars such as In Kathīr, adh-Dhahabī, ibn ‘Abdīl Ḥādī, ibn Rajab, and ibn Ḥajar but gradually over time, the knowledge of ḥadīth started to die and be neglected although there were still some notable scholars.

In our age, Shaykh al-Albānī came and he really revived interest in the sciences of *ḥadīth*. His many works devoted to the sciences of ḥadīth played a great role in creating a renaissance in the study of *ḥadīth* and a level of interest that has rarely been seen. Islamic universities from Morocco to Indonesia all devoted separate colleges for specialization in the sciences of ḥadīth. In general, the Colleges of Hadith have seen more students than any of the other colleges because of the profound level of interest in this area.

Despite that, Shaykh al-Albānī is not at the same level of knowledge as Abū Ḥātim, Abū Zur‘ah, al-Bukhārī or the other Imams of the *Salaf*. There are still some mistakes in regards to methodology that is used by later scholars of *ḥadīth*.

To illustrate the difference:

There is a ḥadīth reported by Ibn Umar, may Allāh be pleased with him, that his father, ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭab, asked the Prophet (ﷺ) if a person can sleep while in a state of *janābah*, the Prophet (ﷺ) said **“Yes, if he makes wudu.”** [Al-Bukhari] Likewise, it has been reported from ‘Ā’ishah, may Allāh be pleased with her, that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to perform *wuḍū’* before sleeping while he was *junub*. This was narrated from A’isha by a number of narrators, among them: **Abū Salamah ibn ‘Abdir-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf, ‘Urwah ibn az-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām, and al-Aswad.**

As for the narrations of **Abū Salamah** and **‘Urwah**, they have been reported by Muslim and al-Bukhārī, and the narration of **al-Aswad** has been reported by Muslim.

There is another narration concerning this issue that some scholars have relied upon to say that the order is merely recommended to fulfill and that it is permissible to sleep without performing *wuḍū’* when *junub*. It is narrated by **Abū Ishāq** from **al-Aswad** that **‘Ā’ishah**, may Allāh be pleased with her, said that **the Prophet (ﷺ) used to sleep while *junub* without touching water.**

This ḥadīth is reported by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasā’ī, ibn Mājah, and at-Tirmidhī.

After relating this ḥadīth, at-Tirmidhī states, **“And more than one has narrated from al-Aswad from ‘Ā’ishah that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to make *wuḍū’* before sleeping – meaning: – when he was *junub*.”**

Imām at-Tirmidhī then states, **“And this is more *ṣaḥīḥ* than the narration of Abū Ishāq from al-Aswad. And they regard this as a mistake from Abū Ishāq.”**

An-Nasā’ī has clarified this contradiction in the narrations as well in *as-Sunan al-Kubrā*.

In discussing this ḥadīth, ibn Rajab states in *Fath al-Bārī* (1/362):

“And this ḥadīth is amongst those that the Imams of Ḥadīth from the *Salaf* agreed in rejecting from Abū Ishāq; from them: Isma‘īl ibn Abī Khālīd, Shu‘bah, Yazīd ibn Hārūn, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, Abū Bakr ibn Abī Shaybah, Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, Abū Bakr al-Athram, al-Jawzajānī, at-Tirmidhī, and ad-Dāraqutnī.

And ibn ‘Abdīl-Barr quotes from Sufyān that he said, ‘It is a mistake.’

And he attributed it to the book of Abū Dāwūd, and what is present in his book is that this statement is from Yazīd ibn Hārūn, not from Sufyān.

And Aḥmad ibn Ṣaliḥ al-Miṣrī al-Ḥāfiẓ stated, ‘It is not permissible for this ḥadīth to be narrated.’

Meaning: It is certainly a mistake, so it is not permissible to narrate it without clarifying its *‘illab*.^[7]

As for the later *fuqahā*, than many of them looked at the trustworthiness of its narrators, so they thought it authentic, and these ones think that every ḥadīth that is narrated by a trustworthy narrator is *sahīḥ*. ***And these ones do not comprehend the fine points of the Science of the Hidden Defects of Ḥadīth.***”

It should be noted that the presentation of this ḥadīth given by Abū Dāwūd and an-Nasāʾī in their books is indicative that they consider this ḥadīth a mistake as well, although they did not explicitly say that.

Many of the great scholars from the later scholars of ḥadīth have graded this ḥadīth *sahīḥ*. This difference in the approach of the earlier scholars and many of the later scholars in critiquing *ḥadīths* is the result of the influence of *uṣūl al-fiqh* on the books of *‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth* that have been written and studied by the later scholars.^[8]

The *Usuliyyin* developed their principles based on “logical arguments” without having practical knowledge of ḥadīth and the realities that existed in the era of narrating ḥadīths that would lead to mistakes. So they would say, “It is possible that these are two different ḥadīths that al-Aswad narrated from ‘A’isha. And Abū Ishaq is a reliable narrator from the greatest of narrators, whose narrations are relied upon by al-Bukhari and Muslim in *as-Sahihayn*. So his ḥadīth must be accepted.”

However, one who studies the narrations of this ḥadīth from Abū Ishāq, it becomes clear he was narrating it relying on his memory by its meaning and then distorted the meaning.^[9]

These early scholars of ḥadīth LIVED the narration of ḥadīths. So they developed their approach to critique of ḥadīths based on the realities that existed that influenced the narration of ḥadīths. Since they had experience with the reality of how ḥadīths were narrated, they knew the causes that lead narrators, even reliable ones, to make mistakes. Based on this knowledge, they could identify the signs that a narrator had made a mistake in narrating a ḥadīth.

Grading this ḥadīth *sahīḥ* is problematic from another perspective as well. These scholars graded this ḥadīth *sahīḥ* for a simple reason: because the books of *al-Jarḥ wat-Ta’dil* have recorded that

these early scholars of ḥadīth critiqued the narrators of this ḥadīth and said that they were reliable narrators, including Abū Ishāq. It is not logical to accept the judgments of these scholars concerning the narrators of ḥadīths and at the same time reject their judgments on the ḥadīths themselves!

This is because the judgments of these scholars was **based** on their judgments on the ḥadīths themselves. After studying the ḥadīths of a narrator and identifying his authentic narrations and his mistakes, they would make a judgment concerning the narrator based on their study of his narrations. So if one were to reject their judgments on the ḥadīths and say that they are not reliable, he would have to reject their statements concerning the narrators.

The methodology of the later scholars in grading ḥadīth is to examine the judgments of the early scholars on the narrators and then to pass a judgment on their narrations. So to use the results that these scholars reached to reject the basis of those results is not logical.

The important lesson that can be taken from this example is that we must accept and submit to the judgments of the early scholars of ḥadīth, as they are the experts in this field, and no one else reaches their level of knowledge concerning ḥadīth. This is why al-Ḥāfiẓ ‘Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Abī Ḥātim said, “When the people of ḥadīth agree upon something, then their consensus is a *hujjah* (proof).”

As for us coming all these centuries after them, then it is necessary for us to study their works and understand their methodology for grading ḥadīths. Then when we come to ḥadīths they may have disagreed about or concerning which we cannot find a judgment from them, we can reach a proper conclusion.

Certainly, we love all of the great scholars of this Ummah that came in the later centuries, however, they are not as knowledgeable as Aḥmad, al-Bukhārī, an-Nasā’ī, ad-Dāraqutnī and the other Imams of Ḥadīth from the *Salaf*, so we return to their words and rely on their judgments in these matters.

It should also be noted that there are a few scholars from the later generations that have brought light to the importance of referring to the scholars of the *Salaf*. One of them is al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī, who was a student of Imām ibn al-Qayyim and many other scholars of his time. From our own era, there is al-‘Allāmah ash-Shaykh ‘Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Yaḥyā al-Mu’allimī.

[1] This was delivered as an introductory lecture to the class *Glimpses of Light from Sahih al-Bukhari* and is by no means comprehensive. And it is not possible to do this tremendous topic

justice in a short article or lecture. Hence, many important developments in the history of the hadith literature and the role of many important scholars has been left out. And this is not due to its lack of importance, but because this topic is deserving of far greater effort than that which someone the likes of me is able. *Wallābul Musta'ān*.

This article is based on the notes of some of those who heard the lecture, may Allah reward them for their efforts.

[2] As stated by ibn Hajar in *Fath al-Bārī*.

[3] Cited by ibn Kathīr in *al-Bidāyah wan-Nihāyah*.

[4] In *Taqyīd al-ʿIlm*.

[5] See the biography of Ma'mar ibn Rashid in *Tabdhīb al-Kamal*.

[6] Those who can read Arabic should refer to al-Mubarakpuri's introduction to *Tuhfah al-Ahwadhi* and *al-Hittab* of al-'Allamah Siddiq Hasan Khan, amongst many other rich references concerning this topic in the Arabic language.

[7] Its hidden weakness.

[8] From the contemporary scholars who rejected this hadith as *da'if*, following the ruling of the early scholars is Shaykh Muqbil ibn Hādī al-Wādī'ī, in his book *Aḥādīth Mu'allah*.

[9] For example, see all the narrations of this hadith in *as-Sunan al-Kubrā* of an-Nasā'ī and *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad.

ARTICLE 2

Introduction to Sunnah

Source: <http://sunnahonline.com/library/fiqh-and-sunnah/127-suhayb-hasan>

Author: Suhaib Hassan

Chapter 1 - Revelation Besides the *Qur'an*

The *Qur'an* is the word of God which was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, *may the peace and blessings of God be upon him*, and preserved both verbally and in writing by his Companions. Apart from the *Qur'an*, whatever the Prophet uttered or did was also preserved by the Companions. Thus the *sunnah* includes the sayings of the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, known commonly as *ahadith* (i.e. sayings), his practices, and actions which gained his approval. Both the *Qur'an* and the *sunnah* fall under a common title - *wahy* (i.e. revelation or inspiration); the difference between the two is that the *Qur'an* is a revelation which is recited (*matalu*) in the formal prayer (*salat*) while the *sunnah* is not recited in the formal prayers. The importance of the *sunnah* as the second source of Islam is covered in Chapter 2.

First of all, we will establish that the Prophet, *may the peace and blessings of God be upon him*, not only received the verses of the *Qur'an* from God, but he also received other revelation from time to time which is now preserved in the form of *ahadith*. The following examples show how the *Qur'an* itself refers to this revelation:

1. According to verse 144 of *surah al-Baqarah* (Chapter 2 of the *Qur'an*), God Almighty commanded the Prophet, *may the peace and blessings of God be upon him*, to face the *Ka'bah* (in Makkah) in his daily prayers instead of Jerusalem:

"We see the turning of thy face to the heavens: now shall We turn thee to a *qiblah* that shall please thee. Turn then thy face in the direction of the Sacred Mosque; wherever ye are, turn your faces in that direction."

But why was the Prophet, *may the peace and blessings of God be upon him*, facing Jerusalem before that? Verse 143 (of *surah al-Baqarah*) shows that God Himself had appointed Jerusalem as the initial *qiblah* (i.e. direction faced when praying) for the Prophet, *may the peace and blessings of God be upon him*:

"And we appointed the *qiblah* to which thou was used, only to test those who followed the Messenger from those who would turn on their heels (from the faith)."

The appointment of the previous *qiblah* is referred to as being in the past. But there is no verse in the *Qur'an* which commands the Prophet, *may the peace and blessings of God be upon him*,

to face Jerusalem at the beginning of his mission! Therefore, the Prophet, *may the peace and blessings of God be upon him*, must have received this guidance from God in a form other than the *Qur'an*. As we have said above, this alternative revelation is preserved in the *sunnah*.

2. In verse 3 of *surahat-Tabrim* (Chapter 66 of the *Qur'an*), a certain incident is cited:

"When the Prophet disclosed a matter in confidence to one of his wives, and she then divulged it, and God made it known to him, he confirmed a part of it and repudiated a part. Then when he told her of it, she said, 'Who told you this?' He said, 'He told me Who knows and is well-acquainted (with all things)'."

We must consider carefully the phrases **"God made it known to him"** and **"He told me Who knows and is well-acquainted"**. The question is, how did God make it known to him and tell him? Certainly not via the *Qur'an*, since there is no mention of it anywhere else in the Book of God. Therefore, the Prophet, *may the peace and blessings of God be upon him*, must have been told via revelation from God which is not part of the *Qur'an*.

3. In verse 5 of *surah al-Hashr* (Chapter 59 of the *Qur'an*), a reference is made to the expedition against the rebellious Jewish tribe of Banu Nadir, during which the Muslims cut down some palm-trees and left others alone.

"Whether ye (O Muslims) cut down the tender palm-trees or ye left them standing on their roots, it was by leave of God, and in order that He might cover the rebellious transgressors with shame."

Here, their action is attributed to the **"leave of God"** given to them. Nowhere in the *Qur'an* is such permission found. Hence God guided the Prophet, *may the peace and blessings of God be upon him*, in this matter but not via the *Qur'an*.

4. According to verses 17-18 of *surah al-Qiyamah* (Chapter 75), God took it upon Himself to collect the *Qur'an*. The Prophet, *may the peace and blessings of God be upon him*, directed the scribes of the *Qur'an* to arrange its chapters in the order found today; this is not the order in which they were revealed. Therefore, since this was God's responsibility, it shows that He guided the Prophet, *may the peace and blessings of God be upon him*, with respect to the order of the chapters.

These are just a few examples out of many which leave no doubt that the Prophet, *may the peace and blessings of God be upon him*, used to receive revelation from God either directly or through the medium of the Angel Gabriel (Arabic: Jibril). A part of this revelation was preserved word for word under the title of the *Qur'an*. All other revelation was embodied either in the Prophet's

sayings or in his practices which were carefully preserved by the Companions as the *sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad, *may the peace and blessings of God be upon him*.

THE VARIOUS PURPOSES SERVED BY THE SUNNAH

The Mother of the Believers (Arabic: *Umm ul-Mu'minin*) 'Aishah was once asked, "What was the character of the Prophet?" She replied, "His character was nothing but the *Qur'an*". Thus the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, was an embodiment of the *Qur'an* itself - whatever he practiced or said, i.e. the *sunnah*, is related to the guidance of the *Qur'an*. Let us explore the role of the *sunnah* in relation to the *Qur'an*.

1. The *sunnah* explains Qur'anic injunctions in detail.

a) God says in verse 43 of *surah al-Baqarah* (Chapter 2 of the *Qur'an*): **"Establish prayer and practice regular charity"**, and many similar verses (Arabic: *ayat*) also exist. All issues related to the prayer, such as the required number of daily prayers, the number of prayer units (Arabic: *rak'at*) and the recitation in each prayer, as well as how to perform the prayer from beginning to end, are explained by the *sunnah*. The Prophet, *peace be upon him*, said: **"Pray as you have seen me pray."** [Reported in *Sahih al-Bukhari*] Similarly, all issues related to the poor alms (Arabic: *zakat*), such as the minimum amount on which *zakat* becomes payable, the percentage paid, the kinds of wealth, goods, and animals on which *zakat* is obligatory, etc. are clearly expounded by the *sunnah* of the Prophet, *may the peace and blessings of God be upon him*.

Again, a detailed picture of fasting and *hajj* can only be seen in the *sunnah*, for the *Qur'an* has touched upon both subjects briefly.

b) Almighty God says in verse 38 of *surah al-Ma'idah* (Chapter 5 of the *Qur'an*):

"As to the thief, male or female, cut off his or her hand - a punishment from God by way of example for their crime. And God is exalted in Power, Wise."

The *sunnah* explains the minimum of stolen goods for which a thief deserves this punishment and the manner in which the hand should be cut off.

To reject the *sunnah*, as some misguided "Muslims" advocate, will render the whole *Qur'an* open to a hotchpotch of interpretations inspired by the individuals' whims and desires, which often come from the devil. For example, someone who does not accept the practical demonstration of formal prayer (Arabic: *salat*) given by the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, will make a mockery of *salat* by doing it in a way suitable to his wishes. But how can a Muslim worship God, if he does not know the way in which God wants to be worshipped?

2. The *sunnah* can establish a specific meaning when a number of meanings are possible.

a) God Almighty says in verse 82 of *surah al-An'am* (Chapter 6 of the *Qur'an*):

"It is those who believe and confuse not their beliefs with *dhulm* that are in security, for they are on (right) guidance."

Imam al-Bukhari relates that some of the Companions of the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, took the word "**dhulm**" in its general meaning, i.e. to do injustice, to do wrong, to sin. So they were troubled and said, "Which of us has not done wrong?" The Prophet, *peace be upon him*, relieved them of this worry by explaining that "**dhulm**" here means to commit *shirk* (i.e. to associate partners with God in worship and/or belief, idol worship, polytheism), as in *surah Luqman* (Chapter 31), verse 13:

"Indeed, worshipping others besides God is the greatest injustice (*dhulm*)."

b) Almighty God says in verse 34 of *surah at-Tawbah* (Chapter 9 of the *Qur'an*):

"Those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the Way of God, announce unto them a most grievous penalty. On the day when heat will be produced out of that wealth in the fire of Hell, and with it will be branded their foreheads, their flanks, and their backs . . . "

The Arabic word *kanz* means a hoard, big or small. So this verse seemingly dooms a person who hoards any amount and does not spend it in the way of God. With this meaning in mind, 'Umar, *may God be pleased with him*, questioned the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, about this verse, to which he replied that once the poor tax (*zakat*) which is due on the hoarded amount is paid, it is no longer considered as *kanz*. [Reported by Ibn Majah]

3. The sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (Arabic: *ahadith*) explain some historical events in detail since they are mentioned only briefly in the *Qur'an*.

a) God says in *surah al-Anfal* (Chapter 8) verse 7:

"Behold! God promised you one of the two (enemy) parties, that it should be yours; ye wished that the one unarmed should be yours, but God intended to justify the Truth according to His words and to cut off the roots of the unbelievers."

Which two parties are meant? Which of them is unarmed? From books of *ahadith* we learn the relevant details about the Battle of Badr, which is the incident referred to in the above verses.

b) *Surah at-Tawbah*, verse 118 says:

"(God turned in mercy) to the three who were left behind;"

Who were these three people, and why did they remain behind? Again, the books of *ahadith* explain this.

c) *Surah 'Abasa* (Chapter 80), verses 1-2:

"He frowned and turned away, because there came to him the blind man."

Who frowned and turned away, and why? Who was the blind man? The details are furnished by the books of *ahadith*.

4. The *sunnah* can specify exemptions from a general injunction.

a) In *surah an-Nisa'* (Chapter 4) verse 11, the share of children in inheritance is given:

"God directs you as regards your children's inheritance ... "

The Prophet, *peace be upon him*, explained that the Muslim child of a disbeliever (Arabic: *kafir*) the non-Muslim child of a Muslim, and the murderer of his/her own father, none of these can inherit.

b) The *Qur'an* declares the flesh of a dead animal and blood as prohibited (Arabic: *haram*) in *surah al-Ma'idah* (Chapter 5), verse 3. The Prophet, *peace be upon him*, exempted fish and locusts from the term **"dead flesh"**, and the liver and spleen from **"blood"**.

5. Deduction of a similar injunction in an analogous case.

a) *Surah an-Nisa'* (Chapter 4), verse 23:

"Prohibited to you are ... and two sisters in wedlock at one and the same time."

The Prophet, *peace be upon him*, declared that to marry a woman as well as her aunt in the same wedlock is also prohibited.

b) Wine has been declared unlawful by Almighty God in *surah al-Ma'idah*, verse 93. The Prophet, *peace be upon him*, extended the prohibition to anything which is intoxicating in large doses, even if it is taken in a small quantity.

6. The Prophet, *peace be upon him*, gave additional injunctions in a number of issues.

One of the many duties of the Messenger, *may the peace and blessings of God be upon him*, was to tell the believers what is lawful (*halal*) and what is unlawful (*haram*) (See *Qur'an* 7:157). For example, he prohibited the flesh of donkeys, dogs, beasts with canine teeth and birds of prey. He also made gold and silk *haram* for Muslim men, but *halal* for Muslim women.

Chapter 2 - Significance of the *Sunnah*

No devout Muslim would ever dare to go against the teachings of the *Qur'an* and *sunnah*, but it is regrettable to note that some of the liberal elite tend to raise the slogan that the Book of God (i.e. the *Qur'an*) is enough and that there is no need at all for the *sunnah* of the Prophet, *may the*

peace and blessings of God be upon him. Slogans like this are raised mainly by people who want to get rid of the Islamic Law (Arabic: *Shari'ah*) completely. The Prophet Muhammad, *peace be upon him*, himself was well-aware that such ill-natured opinions would arise and hence gave a clear warning of this as reported by al-Miqdam ibn Ma'di Karib, one of his Companions, *"I have indeed been given the Qur'an and something similar to it besides it. Yet, the time will come when a man leaning on his couch will say, 'Follow the Qur'an only; what you find in it as halal, take it as halal, and what you find in it as haram, take it as haram.' But truly, what the Messenger of God has forbidden is like what God has forbidden."* [Reported by Abu Dawud and Darimi]

In fact, ANYONE WHO REJECTS THE *SUNNAH* OF THE PROPHET, *PEACE BE UPON HIM*, DOES NOT BELIEVE IN THE *QUR'AN*, for Almighty God Himself has emphasized the importance of the *sunnah* in many verses, of which a few are given below.

"O you who believe! Obey God and obey the Messenger and those charged with authority among you; and if you differ in anything among yourselves, then refer it to God and the Messenger if you do believe in God and the Last Day. That is best and most suitable for final determination." [*Al-Qur'an* 4:59]

"The answer of the believers, when summoned to God and His Messenger in order that he may judge between them, is no other than this: they say, 'We hear and we obey'. It is such as these who will attain success." [*Al-Qur'an* 24:51]

"But no, by your Lord! (O Muhammad) They cannot be believers until they make you judge in all disputes between them, and find in their souls no resistance against your decisions, but accept them with the fullest submission." [*Al-Qur'an* 4:65]

Anas reported that the Messenger of God said, *"I have left among you two things. You will never go astray as long as you hold fast to them; the Book of God and my sunnah."* [Reported by al-Hakim] The Companions of the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, used to hold the commandments given by the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, in a very high esteem, making no distinctions between them and those given by God. Once 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud quoted this saying of the Prophet (*hadith*) while he was delivering a sermon, *"May God curse the women who tattoo their bodies and those who pluck their eyebrows; those who separate their teeth to make them look more pretty and those who try to change the creation of God."* A woman named Umm Yaqub from the tribe of Banu Asad came to know of these words. She approached Ibn Mas'ud and said, "O Abu 'Abd ar-Rahman! It was reported to me that you have cursed such and such women." He said, "Why should I not curse those whom the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, cursed and who are cursed in the Book of God as well." She said, "I have read whatever is contained between the two covers (i.e. the whole *Qur'an*)." He replied, "Had you been a good reader, you would have discovered it. Did you not read the

following verse, **'So take whatever the Messenger gives you and keep away from what he forbids you.'** "

There are numerous examples set by the Companions which show how emphatically they abided by the *sunnah* of the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, to the extent of severing their relations with their kith and kin once they discovered someone going against the *sunnah*. Let us have some examples from the lives of the great *khulafah* (Caliphs, i.e. leaders) of Islam followed by a host of other Companions. Just after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, *peace be upon him*, three major issues confronted the Muslim community. They could have left it apart and disunited, had it not been for the wise guidance of Abu Bakr who settled them amicably in the light of the *sunnah* of the Prophet, *peace be upon him*. The first issue was related to the appointment of the *Khalifah* (i.e. leader of the Muslims). Assembled in Saqifa Bani Sa'ida, a great number of *Muhajirin* (i.e. those who emigrated from Makkah to Madinah) and *Ansar* (those helped the emigrants from Makkah) originally had been busy arguing this issue. The *Ansar* proposed that the leader (Arabic: *Emir*) should be appointed from both of the above communities. The noble companion Abu Bakr cited the saying of the Prophet, "*Leaders (Arabic: Imam) should be from Quraysh (the tribe of Prophet Muhammad) as long as they have the understanding (of the religion).*" The *Ansar* conceded to this quietly. The great companion 'Umar proposed the name of Abu Bakr as the *Khalifah* which was accepted unanimously by those present there and later followed by all the inhabitants of Madinah through the oath of allegiance.

The second issue was related to the place where the Prophet should be buried. Again the companion Abu Bakr cited the saying of the Prophet, "*A Prophet is to be buried where he breathes his last.*" Accordingly, his burial took place in the apartment of his wife, the Mother of the Faithful - 'Aishah, where he died.

The third issue was related to the inheritance of the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, as raised by his daughter Fatimah who came to the *Caliph* Abu Bakr asking for her share. Abu Bakr replied by reminding her of the saying of the Prophet, "*We, the community of the Prophets, are not inherited from - whatever we leave behind us is a charity.*" Fatimah didn't argue further, but retired quietly. Once the great companion 'Umar saw Khalid bin Walid wearing a silk shirt. He asked him to take it off (since it is forbidden for Muslim men to wear silk). Khalid replied that Abdur-Rahman ibn Awf used to have one as well. 'Umar said, "The Prophet allowed him because he suffered badly from itching." Khalid, then, had no alternative but to take it off. Following the news of the Muslim's victory in the conquest of Syria, 'Umar advanced to Damascus with a number of Companions. On reaching the outskirts of Amwas, a town in Syria, the news of a widespread plague in the town reached him. 'Umar consulted his people whether or not he should venture into the town.

The heated discussion that followed came to an end when Abdur-Rahman ibn Awf cited this saying of the Prophet, *"If you are inside a place where an epidemic breaks out, don't come out of it. And don't go in if you happen to be away from such a place."* 'Umar, eventually commanded his people to retreat. Someone still remarked, "'Umar! Do you run away from a destiny decreed by God?" To this 'Umar replied. "Yes, we run away from one destiny to the other decreed by God as well." Such was the wisdom of the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, and centuries ago it foreshadowed today's quarantine regulations. The Caliph 'Uthman once agreed to buy a piece of land from a person. On the completion of the verbal agreement, he asked the man to collect the money the following day. But the man turned up after a few days, only to renounce the agreement. He had changed his mind because his friends had blamed him for selling the land at a low price. 'Uthman could have been adamant about the sale, particularly when it had been agreed upon completely. But he remembered the saying of the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, which admired a person who treated the people easily and wholeheartedly in his sales. So, 'Uthman preferred to concede to the man's wish without raising any objection. Once 'Ali was approached by a person who wanted his counsel concerning the engagement of his daughter whose hand was sought by three persons: Hasan, Husayn and 'Abdullah bin Ja'far. 'Ali found himself involved personally as his two sons were among the candidates. But he recalled the saying of the Prophet, *"The one whose counsel is sought, should be honest."* So after giving some thought, he told the man, "Don't go for Hasan because he is known to have divorced his women many times. And don't go for Husayn as well, as he loves to be admired. Rather go for 'Abdullah bin Ja'far." In one of his journeys, he found a merchant hoarding a stock of grain in the hope of a good price. 'Ali reminded him of the saying of the Prophet, *"The hoarder is cursed"* and instructed his people to set the stock on fire as a punishment. This is how the four Caliphs (Arabic: *Khulafah*) reacted to the *sunnah* of the Prophet. Let us have some more examples from the lives of the Companions. 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud heard a man saying after a sneeze, *"Alhamdulillah was salatu was salamu 'ala rasulallah."* Ibn Mas'ud said to him, *"Whatever you have said is true, but that is not the way that the Prophet has taught us. He instructed us to say simply alhamdulillah after sneezing."* It would be appropriate to remind all Muslims about this *sunnah*, which is commonly abandoned by a great number of them. Say *alhamdulillah* whenever you sneeze. If you hear someone saying this after sneezing, say to him, *yarhamukumullah* (May God have mercy upon you). The sneezer should pray for you as well by saying, *yahdi kumullah wa yuslihu balakum* (May God guide you and set your affairs right). There are plenty of occasions when you should say, *as-salatu was-salamu 'ala rasulallah*. You should say it, for example, whenever you hear the name of our beloved Prophet or whenever you enter a mosque (Arabic: *masjid*) or step out of it adding these words respectively, *allahumma iftah li abwaba*

rahmatik (O God! Open for me the doors of your Mercy) and *allahumma inni as'aluka min fadlika* (O God! I ask you for your Bounty).

Once 'Abdullah ibn Abbas was sitting beside the *Ka'bah* when *Emir* Mu'awiyah entered the Grand Mosque and began circumambulating (Arabic: *tawaf*) around the *Ka'bah*. He kissed the Black Stone in the beginning, but he rubbed his hand on the other three corners of *Ka'bah* as well. Ibn Abbas knew that the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, apart from kissing the Black Stone and rubbing the Yemeni corner - had never touched the other two corners during *tawaf*. So he objected to Mu'awiyah, to which he replied, "To me none of the four corners of *Ka'bah* is deserted." "But that was not the practice of the Prophet, *peace be upon him*," Ibn Abbas emphasized. Mu'awiyah could only say, "You have said the truth." Once Ibn Abbas saw a man drawing a picture of a living being. He advised him not to do that because the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, forbade such a practice.

'Abdullah ibn 'Umar was well-known for his adherence to the *sunnah*. He once saw his son Bilal stopping his wife from going to the mosque. 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar said, "Don't do that because the Messenger of God has said: '*Don't stop the female servants of God from entering the Houses of God.*'" Bilal was adamant that he would not allow her to go, even after listening to this saying. Ibn 'Umar was so upset that he swore never to speak to him again until his dying day. 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr bin al-As had a very large garden with a great number of palm trees. Water in this area was so abundant that his assistant planned to sell the extra amount of it, after irrigating the whole garden, to a neighbor at an exorbitant price of thirty thousand dirhams. That offer could have attracted anyone except a companion like 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr who refused to approve of this sale because the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, forbade the selling of any extra water. Abu Hurayrah used to address a gathering of Muslims on Friday night (lit: after sunset on Thursday). Once, before beginning his sermon, he said to the people, "Whoever has cut off from any of his relations should leave this place." No one stood up. On repeating these words thrice, a young man left the place and went to his aunt whom he had deserted a long time before and reconciled with her. Abu Hurayrah said this because he knew that all actions are presented to God on each Friday night. He didn't like his assembly of the devout to be smeared by a person who had committed the sin of deserting his relatives. By doing so, he saved a person from a major sin. Anas ibn Malik was known to be a faithful servant of the Prophet, *peace be upon him*. Once he was invited to a party where a Magian (i.e. a Persian fire-worshipper) offered him some *faluda* (a well-known drink) in a silver glass. Anas refused to accept it. He preferred to drink in an earthen pot than to use the silver one because the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, forbade the Muslims from eating or

drinking from golden or silver utensils. This is how the Companions behaved throughout their lives - setting sublime examples of adherence to the *sunnah*.

The numerous examples given above are from the Companions. Let us see what the four great Imams (i.e. religious scholars) have said about the authority of the *sunnah*.

a) *Imam* Abu Hanifah was asked, "What do we do if we find a saying of yours opposing the Book of God?" He replied, "Leave my saying and stick to the Book of God." The questioner asked, "What if it contradicts a saying of the Prophet?" Abu Hanifah said, "Leave my saying in the face of the Prophet's saying." Again he was asked, "What if it goes against the saying of a Companion?" Again he said, "Leave my saying in the face of the Companion's saying." [Reported in *al-Qawl al-Mufid* by Shawkani] *Imam* Abu Hanifah also declared, "My way (Arabic: *madhhab*) is whatever *hadith* (saying of the Prophet) that is proved to be authentic." [Shami 1:50, Al-Fulani in *Iqaz*, p. 62]

b) The saying of *Imam* Malik ibn Anas is well-known, "The saying of any person can be accepted or rejected, except for the Prophet of God, *peace be upon him*." [Reported by Ibn 'Abdul-Barr and Ibn Hazm. Also in *al-Yawaqit wa al-Jawahir* 2:96] He also said, "I am just a mortal; sometimes I am wrong, sometimes I am right - so check my opinions. Whatever agrees with the Book (i.e. the *Qu'ran*) and the *sunnah*, accept it; whatever disagrees with them, reject it." [Reported by al-Fulani in *Iqaz*, p. 72]

c) Once *Imam* ash-Shafi'i narrated a saying of the Prophet (*hadith*). Someone from the audience said, "Do you say so as well?" On hearing this, the *Imam* was enraged. His face turned pale and he said, "Woe to you! Which earth would carry me, which sky would shelter me if I narrate a saying of the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, and do not hold the same view! Do you see a *zunhar* (belt worn by non-Muslims) on me? Or have you noticed me coming out of a church? How can I report something from the Prophet, *peace be upon him*, and not agree with?!"

d) *Imam* Ahmad ibn Hanbal said, "Do not follow me or Malik or Shafi'i or Auza'i or Thawri, but take from where they took (i.e. from the *Qu'ran* and authentic *sunnah*)." [Reported by al-Fulani and Ibn al-Qayyim] He also said, "He who is on the verge of destruction rejects a saying of the Messenger of God, *may the peace and blessings of God be upon him*." [Reported by Ibn al-Jawzi]

Article 3:

On The Importance of Knowing Men

Author: Muhaddith Abdur-Rahman al-Mu'allimee al-Yamani

Source:

<http://spubs.com/sps/sp.cfm?subsecID=MNJ15&articleID=SLF020003&articlePages=1>

The Dignity of Knowledge

And that in which there is no dispute is that the sciences vary in the extent of the dignity (that they contain). Amongst them is the noble and the most noble, the important and the most important.

And no matter what might be conceived of dignity and excellence for the (various) sciences of philosophy, natural sciences, mathematics, literature, industrial sciences and other than them from the sciences of this universe - no matter what might be conceived for them of dignity, excellence and an elevated rank - then (most certainly) they do not approach (the level of) that knowledge - which along with sharing with those sciences in the furtherance of the mental faculties and enlightenment of the minds - is unique in rectifying the manners, and bringing about eternal happiness, **and it is the knowledge of the deen.**

And however much a person may advance in the skills and knowledge-related disciplines of this universe and (in) facilitating the ways and means of (attaining) ease and comfort, then (even) if that raises him from the (level of) animals from one aspect, it places him there from another aspect - (which occurs) so long as his manners are not purified. Therefore, he (ought to be) shaped by gentleness, mercy, generosity, chastity, humility, truthfulness, trustworthiness, justy, benevolence, and others besides them from the noble manners and characteristics.

Knowledge and Manners

Everyone who has reflected and considered over the nations and individuals of this time will know that (this time) rightfully deserves to be called ‘ the era of knowledge’ . However, along

with that he sees that it is necessary for it to be called a different name - by looking at the decline in morals!

The earthly souls are (but made of) dust. It is their inherent nature to give birth to blameworthy characteristics so long as they are not nourished by the pure water of eemaan and (so long as) the (radiant) sun of the correct knowledge of the deen does not rise over them, and (so long as) the breezes of the Wise Reminder do not rage against them.

So whichever land is devoid of this water, and the rays of this (radiant) sun are veiled from it, and is restricted from the paths of those breezing winds, then its fruits will be as the Angels - upon them be peace - said:

Will you place therein (i.e. the earth) those who will cause mischief and shed blood...[Soorah Baqarah 2:30]

The Fountains of Islaam

For the deen - and that is Islaam - are two great fountains: The Book of Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic and the Sunnah of His Messenger (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam).

The Definition of the Sunnah

The ‘Sunnah’ is an expression of: that which has been established from the Prophet (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) of sayings, actions and (things) other than them which constitute an explanation of the Qur’aan, an explanation of the rulings (of Islaam), imbibing of the manners and other than that from the beneficial things of the present life and the next.

The Companions and the Sunnah

The first of those who acquired the Sunnah, are the Noble Companions. So they memorised it and understood it. They knew it in (both) its generality and its specific detail, and they conveyed it - as they were ordered - to those who came after them.

Then the Successors (‘Taabi’oon) acquired it and they conveyed it to those who followed them and so on. So a companion would say, *"I heard the Messenger of Allaah (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) say such and such..."* and a successor would say, *"I heard so and so companion say, ‘I heard the Prophet (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam)...*’ " and the one who would follow the successor would say, *"I heard so*

and so say, ‘ I heard so and so companion say, ‘ I heard the Prophet (sallallaahu alaihi wasallam) say’ ’ ” and so on.

The Need for Memorising the Sunnah

Everyone who knows that Muhammad is the Seal of the Messengers, and that his sharee’ ah is the seal of all the Sharee’ ahs, and that the happiness of this life and the next, and of eternal life lies in following him will know that the people are more in need of memorising the Sunnah than they are of food and drink.

The Obligation of Knowing the Conditions of Men

Sometimes a narration may come from someone from whom it is obligatory to accept, or from whom it is obligatory to reject, or from whom it is necessary to withhold from (until further clarification). And how foolish it would be, that that which is from the truth which the Seal of the Prophets conveyed from His Lord, the Mighty and Majestic and that which is from the falsehood that Allaah and His Messenger are free of, should be known by other than knowing the conditions of the narrators.

It is likewise for the various historical occurrences. In fact the need for knowing the condition of those who narrate them is even more severe, due to the prevalent neglect in the narration of such events and occurrences.

(And this is) in addition to the fact that being acquainted with condition of men is itself one of most important branches of history. So when it is necessary to be acquainted with the condition and state of the narrators, it is also necessary to make this known, so that everyone who knows the condition of a narrator should inform (others) about his condition, so that the people may know of it.

And this Ummah has (indeed) acted upon this obligation in the desired manner.

Article 4:

Importance of knowing the narrators of Hadeeth

Source: <http://www.islamweb.net/emainpage/index.php?page=articles&id=135690>

The narrators of Hadeeth are the most honourable and respectable Muslims, as they are keepers and preservers of Sunnah. Most of them are the companions of the Prophet ﷺ who witnessed the acts and learnt the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ. Others are the successors of the companions. Who were blessed by Allaah and they are highly respected by all Muslims. They are shining stars of Islam.

Their hearts were free from worldly desires. Reading their biographies will increase love and devotion towards them and develop more interest to be faithful and obedient in the heart of the Muslim who reads their biography.

Allaah Almighty Says (what means): "Verily, We have sent down the Reminder, and surely, We will guard it (from corruption)." [Quran; 15:9] The above promise made by Allaah is obviously fulfilled in the undisputed purity of the Quranic text throughout the fourteen centuries since its revelation.

However, what is often forgotten by many Muslims is that the above divine promise also includes, by necessity, the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for it is the practical example of the implementation of the Quranic guidance, the Wisdom taught to the Prophet ﷺ along with the Scripture, and neither the Quran nor the Sunnah can be understood correctly without recourse to the other.

Allaah preserved the Sunnah by enabling the Companions ﷺ and their followers رضى الله عنهم to memorize, write down and pass on the statements of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ and the descriptions of his way, as well as to continue the blessings of practicing the Sunnah. Later, as the purity of the knowledge of the Sunnah became threatened, Allaah

caused the Muslim nation to produce outstanding individuals of incredible memory-skills and analytical expertise, who journeyed tirelessly to collect hundreds of thousands of narrations and distinguish the true words of precious wisdom of their Messenger ﷺ from those corrupted by weak memories, from forgeries by unscrupulous liars, and from the statements of the enormous number of scholars, the Companions and those who followed their way, who had taught in various centers of learning and helped to transmit the legacy of Muhammad ﷺ - all of this achieved through precise attention to the words narrated and detailed familiarity with the biographies of the thousands of reporters of Hadeeth. Action being the best way to preserve teachings, the scholars of Islam also revived the practice of the blessed authentic Sunnah.

Unfortunately, however, statements will continue to be attributed to the Prophet ﷺ although the person quoting them may have no idea what the people of knowledge in the field of Hadeeth science have ruled regarding those hadeeths, thus ironically being in danger of contravening the Prophet's ﷺ widely-narrated stern warnings about attributing incorrect/unsound statements to him.

The methodology of the expert scholars of Hadeeth in assessing narrations and sorting out the genuine from the mistaken, fabricated etc., forms the subject-matter of a wealth of material left to us by the scholars of Hadeeth (traditionists).

A Hadeeth is composed of two parts: the Matn (text) and the Isnaad (chain of reporters). A text may seem to be logical and reasonable but it needs an authentic Isnaad with reliable reporters to be acceptable. 'Abdullaah Ibn Al-Mubaarak رحمه الله (d. 181 AH), one of the illustrious teachers of Imaam Al-Bukhaari رحمه الله said: "The Isnaad is part of the religion, had it not been for the Isnaad, then people would have claimed whatever they wished."

Among the sciences of Hadeeth is the study of the chain of reporters (the Isnaad). Many Muslim scholars have specialized in this field. It includes identifying the name of each and every narrator (reporter), his character (his truthfulness, piety, public behavior), his

ability and reputation as a memorizer and the types of narrations he is known to report, whether authentic, weak, fabricated, etc. In addition, each narrator should be identified by a rating given by other narrators who knew him. So all of these and many other details must be considered to know the degree to which a Hadeeth may be used as a basis for Islamic belief or practice (Sharee'ah), or merely as a point of interest (not to be attributed to the sayings, etc. of the Prophet ﷺ).

After the Book of Allaah (The Quran), the books of Hadeeth collection that were collected by Imaams Bukhaari and Muslim رحمهما الله are considered by the Muslim scholars to be the most authentic books of Hadeeth. However, there are other famous scholars in the field who compiled books of Hadeeth such as; Abu Daawood (d.275), At-Tirmithi (d. 279), An-Nasaa'i (d. 303) and others رحمهم الله.

Article 5:

The Concept of Tawaatur

Source: <http://www.islamweb.net/emainpage/printarticle.php?id=183231&lang=E>

The first thing to be considered when a report reaches us is how did it reach us, is it by way of Tawaatur, or by way of Ahad?

Tawatur in the Arabic language comes from the tri-literal root wa • to • ra, represented in English by the letters 'w' • 't' • 'r'. Some words derived from this root have consecutiveness, "rapid succession," or copiousness woven into their meaning in one way or another.

For example, Allaah Says (what means): *{Then We sent Our messengers in succession.}* [Quran 23:44] The word used in Arabic is tatra, which means one after the other, in succession. Besides, in a great poem, Labeed Ibn Rabee'ah describes the raindrops descending in "rapid succession," drenching the fur coat of a doe, using the word Mutawaatir.

Phonetically (and even visually when the sounds are written in English letters), this word sounds is like its meaning: watara watara watara....You can imagine that sound of raindrops pattering against a window-pane, one drop after another.

Tawaatur in the terminology of the scholars of hadeeth means transmitting a narration or religious text by a group of narrators from a group of narrators, generation after generation and so forth, and they are all trustworthy people and it is absolutely impossible for them to agree on a lie. The relationship between the terminological meaning and the linguistic one is

that what is Mutawaatir is reported by one person after the other after the other and so on, as if the people were coming like raindrops in a downpour.

For example, take the great Indian Ocean tsunami that hit Asia and Africa on 26 December 2004. The vast majority of readers of this article were not eyewitnesses to its actual occurrence. Nor can one depend on what was seen on television to prove that it did happen because we all know that film technology is eminently capable of producing imagery, whether accurate or fake.

Even if we exclude the possibility of tampering with images, the report we received was that the tsunami hit the entire coastline of the Indian Ocean, Asia, and Africa, while the images we saw only covered a minute portion of this. What would you say if I told you that the tsunami never happened and that the news was a conspiracy? You would reject what I said without investigation, and you would be right in doing so because it would be irrational to think that millions of people who were, indeed, witnesses to the tsunami would conspire to invent such a lie. Even though you were likely not an eyewitness to the tsunami, you can be 100 percent certain that it did happen. This is an example of a Mutawaatir report.

There are three conditions that must be fulfilled for a report to be Mutawaatir:

1. A large unexceptionable number of people convey the report. There is no specific number that constitutes a "large number." Rather, this is defined by the impossibility of conspiracy or collective mistake.
2. That there are a large number of people in every link of the chain of narrators.
3. That the conveyed report itself be about something that is tangible or perceptible, such

as: "We saw," or, "We heard," or, "We felt," and so on. So saying, for example, that the universe began with a big bang cannot be Mutawaatir, since it is something conceptual, something that none of us were capable of perceiving. However, that does not mean that the big bang is false. It just means that it is not a Mutawaatir report.

There are two categories of Mutawaatir reports:

The first category is those reports that are conveyed word for word, such as the statement of the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam: ***"He who lies about me intentionally, then let him await his place in Hell-Fire."*** More than 70 Companions who actually had heard the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, saying these words had reported it. Then the number increased in every successive link of the chain through the generations.

The second category of Mutawaatir reports are those Ahadeeth whose meanings are conveyed by Tawaatur but not a verbatim, word-for-word statement, such as the fact that the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, used to raise his hands while supplicating. This has been reported in about 100 Ahadeeth, all of which have some variations, but make the common, perceptible observation that the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, used to raise his hands when supplicating.

There are a significant number of Mutawaatir reports, but the vast majority of Hadeeth literature is comprised of Ahad reports, meaning anything that does not fall under the category of Tawaatur.

The scholar, Jamal Al-Deen Al-Sayooti, and others have compiled these Mutawaatir reports into books of their own for easy reference.

This is the general idea of the concept of Tawaatur.

Article 6

he effects of using weak HadeethT



The term “weak hadeeth” refers to any narration which does not fulfill the conditions of authenticity. The scholars of Hadeeth, may Allaah have mercy upon them, agree that a “weak hadeeth” must not be attributed to the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, by saying: “The Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, said ...”.

Applying weak hadeeth in excellent deeds.

Very often when you point to the weakness of a Hadeeth you hear being cited, someone will immediately say: “But this Hadeeth is talking about (the reward of) excellent deeds, and it is alright to refer to unauthentic Hadeeth when talking about excellent deeds.”

It has become a norm amongst the majority of a good number of scholars and students of Islamic learning that it is alright to use weak Hadeeth when it refers to the reward of excellent deeds. They consider it a fully accepted rule that should not be argued. They also would quote the words of great scholars to support their point.

Before going into detail to refute the arguments of these people, let me point out that they have, in general, misunderstood the sayings of the great scholars of Islam they quote, relative to weak Hadeeth and how it should be used.

This serious misunderstanding has led to the great epidemic of freely using weak narrations; which certainly may involve lying against the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam.

Refutation of the claim:

First, we should mention that the rule cited earlier (that weak Hadeeth can be used in excellent deeds) is not accepted by all the scholars of Hadeeth. For instance, Abu Bakr Ibn ‘Arabi, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: “The weak Hadeeth should be absolutely avoided and not dealt with.”

Second, we should know that the scholars of Hadeeth who permitted the use of weak Hadeeth have set very strict rules applying to their use. Al-Haafith Ibn Hajar Al-‘Asqalaani, may Allaah have mercy upon him,

said: “There are three conditions that must be fulfilled in order to use the weak Hadeeth:

a. It is well accepted that the weakness should only be slight. This will help to exclude Hadeeth reported by liars or accused reporters (of lying) who are known to commit big mistakes.

b. The weak Hadeeth should be used under already well-established principles and should not bring in ideas of its own.

c. When a weak Hadeeth is used (after it fulfills the above two conditions), it should not be believed to be said by the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam; to do so we would be crediting him with that which he did not say.

For the above conditions to be satisfied, people planning to use the weak Hadeeth should have the ability to:

1. Distinguish between the weak and the authentic Hadeeth in order to fulfill condition (c) above, otherwise they may fall into lying about the Messenger, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam.
2. Distinguish between the slightly weak Hadeeth and those which are very weak or fabricated, in order to fulfill condition (a) above.

What should be very clear to Muslims is that the ability to make the above two distinctions is not possessed except by a very small category of the scholars of Hadeeth (who can be counted on the fingers).

In particular with reference to item (2) above, only a few of the scholars of Hadeeth in all of the history of Islam have dealt with it.

Someone might justifiably ask: “Why are we so strict in this matter (of using weak Hadeeth), when some scholars of Hadeeth have permitted it?”

The answer to this question was given by a great scholar of Hadeeth, Muhammad Naassir Ad-Deen Al-Albaani, may Allaah have mercy upon him, who said:

“The earlier scholars used to mention the Hadeeth with their full Isnaad (chain of Narrators), so that any other scholar reading their treatise could know from the chain of Narrators the degree of authenticity of the Hadeeth.”

We pray that this small introduction to the subject of weak Hadeeth and using it as proof has helped in clarifying how dangerous this is.

By: Abu ‘Abdullaah Muhammad Al-Jibaaly

Article 7:

Authenticity of Hadith

Source: <http://www.missionislam.com/knowledge/Authenticity.htm>

Lest anyone should suggest the sources of the foregoing discussion on the believers' way are historical exposition written down after the lifetime of the Companions, and therefore unreliable, we would argue as follows. It is beyond doubt that the Qur'an and its injunctions and the commandments to believe in and act to according to it is valid and continue to be propagated. The only question is whether or not the believers' way can be actually ascertained. To entertain any doubts amounts to an abrogation of the Qur'an, and no sane and educated non-believer would venture to suggest to a Muslim its rejection.

As long as the path of following the Qur'an remains open, access to the believers' way (that is, the presence of the Qur'anic injunctions) must also remain open. Likewise the means to obtain complete knowledge of it must remain unchanged. That being so, what other course is there to acquire detailed information regarding the practice of the earliest Muslims than to refer to the compilations of Traditions and the books on Tabaqat, Asma' ar-Rijal, history and the life-record of the reporters of Seerah, Hadith and Islamic history?

To declare these sources of knowledge unreliable, false or fictitious would mean shutting the door on practical adherence to the Qur'an. Moreover, the superiority that Islam and the Muslims enjoy over all other faiths and religious communities would also be destroyed. For it would necessarily mean that the Muslims had no history, no intellectual or practical achievements to their credit, since there is no dependable way of knowing about those achievements. Surely, no Muslim could accept such a position.

How strangely inconsistent is the behaviour of some of the deniers of the Traditions. For they believe history to be true but hold the Hadith to be untrustworthy. Yet these historians neither make effort to indicate how and through what source they came by their knowledge of any particular event, nor observe the conditions prescribed and adopted by the traditionalists for testing the authenticity of those reports. Is it not absurd that chronological narratives of past events should be acceptable, but not the standard collections of the Traditions even though it was strictly laid down for the compilers of the Traditions that they must indicate in unbroken succession the sources and authorities for every single report that came to their knowledge of the sayings and deeds of the Prophet (saws) or of events and circumstances relating to the

Companions, and further, that there must be conclusive evidence available as to the veracity, integrity and reliability of those sources and authorities?

To reject the Traditions as unreliable, despite solid and irrefutable proofs of their truth and authenticity, is to say that their collectors and compilers recorded incorrect and imaginary reports together with spurious references and a concocted chain of narrators! These critics and fault-finders should ask themselves whether it is possible that no "genuine" Muslim was present at the time of the collection of ahadeeth to challenge the fraud and condemn it?

Take al-Muwatta, for example. According to Abu Taalib this volume of Traditions was compiled in 120 or 130 AH i.e. 110 or 120 years after the death of the Prophet (saws). Until about twelve or twenty-three years before its compilation venerable Companions who had had the good fortune to see or hear the Prophet (saws) in person were alive, while the number of **Taabi'een** (those who immediately followed the Companions and profited from their company) who lived throughout the Islamic territories of the Hijaaz, Syria, Egypt and Iraq, and in Madeenah itself, where the book (al-Muwatta) took shape, was very considerable indeed. We give the names of a few of them:

- (i) Ishaq b. 'Abd Allah b. Abu Talhah (d. 136 AH)
- (ii) Ismaa'eel b. Muhammad b. Zuhree (d. 134 AH)
- (iii) Rabee'ah b. Abu 'Abd ar-Rahman (d. 129 AH)
- (iv) Zayd b. Aslam (d. 136 AH)
- (v) Saalim b. Abu Umayyah (d. 129 AH)
- (vi) Sa'd b. Ishaq (d. after 140 AH)
- (vii) Sa'eed b. Abu Sa'eed al-Maqburee (d. 123 AH)
- (viii) Salmah b. Dinar (d. after 140 AH)
- (ix) Shareek b. 'Abd Allah b. Abu Nimr (d. after 140 AH)
- (x) Saalih b. Kaysaan (d. after 140 AH)

- (xi) Safwaan b. Sulaym (d. 124 AH)
- (xii) ‘Abd Allaah b. Abu Bakr b. Abu Hazm (d. 135 AH)
- (xiii) ‘Abd Allaah b. Dinaar (d. 127 AH)
- (xiv) Abu az-Zinaad (d. 130 AH)
- (xv) ‘Abd ar-Rabb b. Sa’eed (d. 139 AH)
- (xvi) Muhammad b. al-Munkadir (d. 131 AH)
- (xvii) Makhramah b. Sulaymaan (d. 130 AH)
- (xviii) Moosaa b. ‘Uqbah (d. 141 AH)
- (xix) Wahb b. Kaysaan (d. 127 AH)
- (xx) Yahyaa b. Sa’eed, the Qaadi of Madeenah (d. 143 AH)
- (xxi) Yazeed b. ‘Abd Allaah al-Laythee (d. 139 AH)
- (xxii) Yazeed b. Rumaan (d. 130 AH)
- (xxiii) Hishaam b. ‘Urwah (d. 145 AH)
- (xxiv) Miswar b. Rifaa’ah (d. 138 AH)
- (xxv) Abu Tuwalaah, the Qaadi of Madeenah (d. 132 AH)

Leaving aside the bonds created through direct instruction and training, the period of time between the generation of the **Tabi’en** and the Prophet (saws) was the same as that between grandfather and grandchildren. Thus, even if the deliberate effort of teaching and instruction had not been made, the people of that generation would have become acquainted, in the normal course of things, with numerous details of the Prophet’s (saws) life, as all grandchildren are about the character, habits and actions of their grandparents.

Now, consider the collection of the Prophet’s (saws) sayings made by Imam Maalik. These were made in the very place where the Prophet (saws) had spent the last ten years of his life, where

there was hardly a home that had not come under his influence or did not have some association with him. Imam Malik read these out openly - in that very town - and thousands of people came from all over the Islamic world and listened to what he said, many of them also making copies, taking them home and thereby transmitting their contents to tens of thousands of other men. Is it conceivable then that not one single Muslim should say that all these Traditions or a large part of them were false or fabricated?

Even if Imam Maalik had not been the man of integrity and calibre that he was, could he have dared to make such a fabrication in those circumstances? Even supposing that he had done so, is it possible that the people of Madeenah could have passively accepted such a fabrication, and remained silent spectators to the making of a fraudulent addition to Faith which would be propagated to the end of time?

Imam Maalik, moreover, indicated the names of twenty-five of the afore-mentioned Taabi'een and a few other Madeenans as the sources who had related the Traditions to him. If it is accepted, for mere argument's sake, that the Imam himself was guilty of falsehood and misrepresentation, surely these persons, who were alive at that time, would not have allowed him to get away with it.

In sum, to condemn al-Muwatta or the other standard compilations of the traditions and their chain of transmitters as wholly inaccurate is not only to sink to the depths of perdition but also to indicate one's stupidity and ignorance.

For that reason, no one before the present era ventured to make such a charge. On the contrary, these collections have, from the time of their compilation, consistently been recognized as correct and authentic. A very large number of learned men have heard them from their seniors and also related them to others. Al-Muwatta, too, was read out by Imam Malik to nearly a thousand persons, as Shaah 'Abd al-Azez Dihlawi says in his book *Bustan al-Muhaddithin*. Suyuti also, in the preface of *Tanwir al-Hawalik* has mentioned the names of about fifty people who narrated al-Muwatta after hearing it directly from Imam Malik. The process has been going on without interruption up to the present time and people have been narrating it from their predecessors in the same way, but on an even larger scale.

Again, it is hard to understand why people who so want only to reject the Traditions, do not realize that every living community naturally inclines towards safeguarding its heritage and does its utmost to preserve the relics and the memory of the attainments of its illustrious ancestors.

This being the case, how could it be that the Muslims who are the best of peoples and distinguished in the world for their love of learning and other commendable qualities of mind and character, should not have taken steps to preserve the life-record and sayings of their own Prophet (saws)?

Article 8:


Sunnah – The Second Source of Legislation

Source: Islamweb.net

The Sunnah (the actions, sayings and confirmations of Prophet Muhammad, salallaahu alayhi wa sallam is the second source of Islamic legislation and must be in complete agreement with the first source (i. e. the Quran).

The term Sunnah comes from the root word ‘sanna’, which means to pave the way.

Sunnah can be used to describe a path that people follow. In Islamic terminology, Sunnah applies to a prophetic way which includes references to the Prophet’s sayings, actions, approvals, physical features and character traits.

His actions pertain to anything he did, as authentically reported by the Companions . His silent approvals on different issues meant he didn’t oppose or mind what he saw, heard or knew of the actions or sayings of his Companions. Sunnah also includes everything authentically narrated concerning the Prophet's physical features and his traits.

The Quran and the Sunnah complement each other. Without the Sunnah, Islam is not complete, likewise without the Quran, Islam is not complete.

Actually, Sunnah is so important that without it one cannot fully understand the Quran and Islam, or be able to apply it to his life. Both of these sources guide us to the right path.

The Quran is the word of Allah, whereas the Sunnah is its practical interpretation. Sunnah also gives a full account of the life of the Prophet salallaahu alayhi wa sallam.

The Quran principally deals with basics. It is the Sunnah which gives the details and necessary explanations of Quranic injunctions. For instance, Allaah Says in the Quran what means: "...Establish the prayer..." [2: 43] But it does not specify how the prayer has to be performed.

Even after knowing the details, it may not be possible to follow the divine injunctions contained in the Quran. For not everything can be properly understood by words alone. Therefore, the Messenger of Allaah salallaahu alayhi wa sallam demonstrated before the believers how the prayer was to be performed.

Thus, not only did the Prophet salallaahu alayhi wa sallam inform the believers of the divine injunctions, but he also put these teachings into practice in all matters pertaining to religion and daily life. He salallaahu alayhi wa sallam himself practiced these injunctions scrupulously. His practice was not a private matter; it had the status of a detailed interpretation and application of the Quran.

Importance of the Sunnah

The Quran repeatedly reminds us of the importance of the Sunnah, enjoining us to strictly follow the Prophet salallaahu alayhi wa sallam.

Allaah, Almighty, Says what means: "...And whatever the Messenger has given you – take; and what he has forbidden you – refrain from..." [Quran 59:7]

Allaah also Says what means: "But no, by your Lord, they will not [truly] believe until they make you [O Muhammad] judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves and then find within themselves no discomfort from what you have judged and submit in [full, willing] submission.." [Quran 4:65]

Again, Allaah Says what means: "It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allaah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should [thereafter] have any choice about their affair. And whoever disobeys Allaah and His Messenger has certainly strayed into clear error." [Quran 33:36]

According to many verses in the Quran, the Muslim is bound to follow the Sunnah of the Prophet salallaahu alayhi wa sallam. No one remains Muslim if he does not accept the Prophet's Sunnah, salallaahu alayhi wa sallam.

The Sunnah is nothing but a reflection of the personality of the Prophet salallaahu alayhi wa sallam, who is to be obeyed at every cost.

The Sunnah was not, as is generally supposed, a thing of which the need may have been felt only after the Prophet's death salallaahu alayhi wa sallam, for it was very much needed in his lifetime. The two most important religious institutions of Islam are Prayer and Zakaat (obligatory alms giving); yet when the injunction relating to Prayer and Zakaat were delivered, and they were repeatedly revealed in both Makkah and Madeenah, no details were supplied. 'Keep up prayers' is the Quranic injunction, and it was the Prophet himself salallaahu alayhi wa sallam who by his own actions gave details of the prayer by saying: "Pray as you see me praying." [Al-Bukhaari]

Zakaah is again an obligation frequently repeated in the Quran, yet it was the Prophet salallaahu alayhi wa sallam who gave the rules and regulations for its payment and collection. These are two examples, but since Islam covers the entire sphere of human activities, hundreds of points had to be explained by the Prophet salallaahu alayhi wa sallam in word and deed.

The importance of the Sunnah, even as a second source of Islam, was an openly accepted issue by the Companions of the Prophet salallaahu alayhi wa sallam. Whenever they couldn't find a solution to a problem in the Quran, they would refer to the Sunnah. And they were the most diligent in preserving it for those who came after them.

Article 9:

The Science Of Hadith

Source: <http://www.islamic-awareness.org/Hadith/Ulum/hadsciences.html>

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ (سورة الحجر - آية ٩)

In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate the Most Merciful

We have, Without doubt, sent down the message: and we will assuredly guard it (from corruption) (Qur'an 15:9)

The promise made by Allah^(SWT) in Qur'an 15:9 is obviously fulfilled in the undisputed purity of the Qur'anic text throughout the fourteen centuries since its revelation. However, what is often forgotten by many Muslims is that the divine promise also includes, by necessity, the **Sunnah** of the Prophet^(P), because the **Sunnah** is the practical example of the implementation of the Qur'anic guidance, the wisdom taught to the Prophet^(P) along with the scripture, and neither the Qur'an nor the **Sunnah** can be understood correctly without the other.

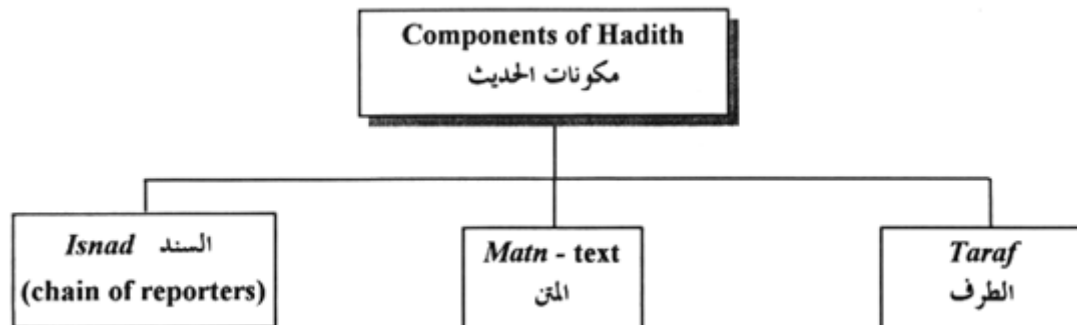
Allah^(SWT) preserved the **Sunnah** by enabling the Companions and those after them to memorize, write down and pass on the statements of the Prophet^(P), and the descriptions of his way, as well as to continue the blessings of practicing the **Sunnah**.

Later, as the purity of the knowledge of the **Sunnah** became threatened, Allah^(SWT) caused the Muslim **Ummah** to produce individuals with exceptional memory skills and analytical expertise, who travelled tirelessly to collect thousands of narrations and distinguish the true words of prophetic wisdom from those corrupted by weak memories, from forgeries by unscrupulous liars, and from the statements of the large number of **Ulama**(scholars), the Companions and those who followed their way. All of this was achieved through precise attention to the words narrated, and detailed familiarity with the biographies of the thousands of reporters of hadith.

The methodology of the expert scholars of hadith in assessing the narrations and sorting out the genuine from the mistaken and fabricated, forms the subject matter of the science of hadith. In this article a brief discussion is given of the terminology and classifications of hadith.

Components Of Hadith

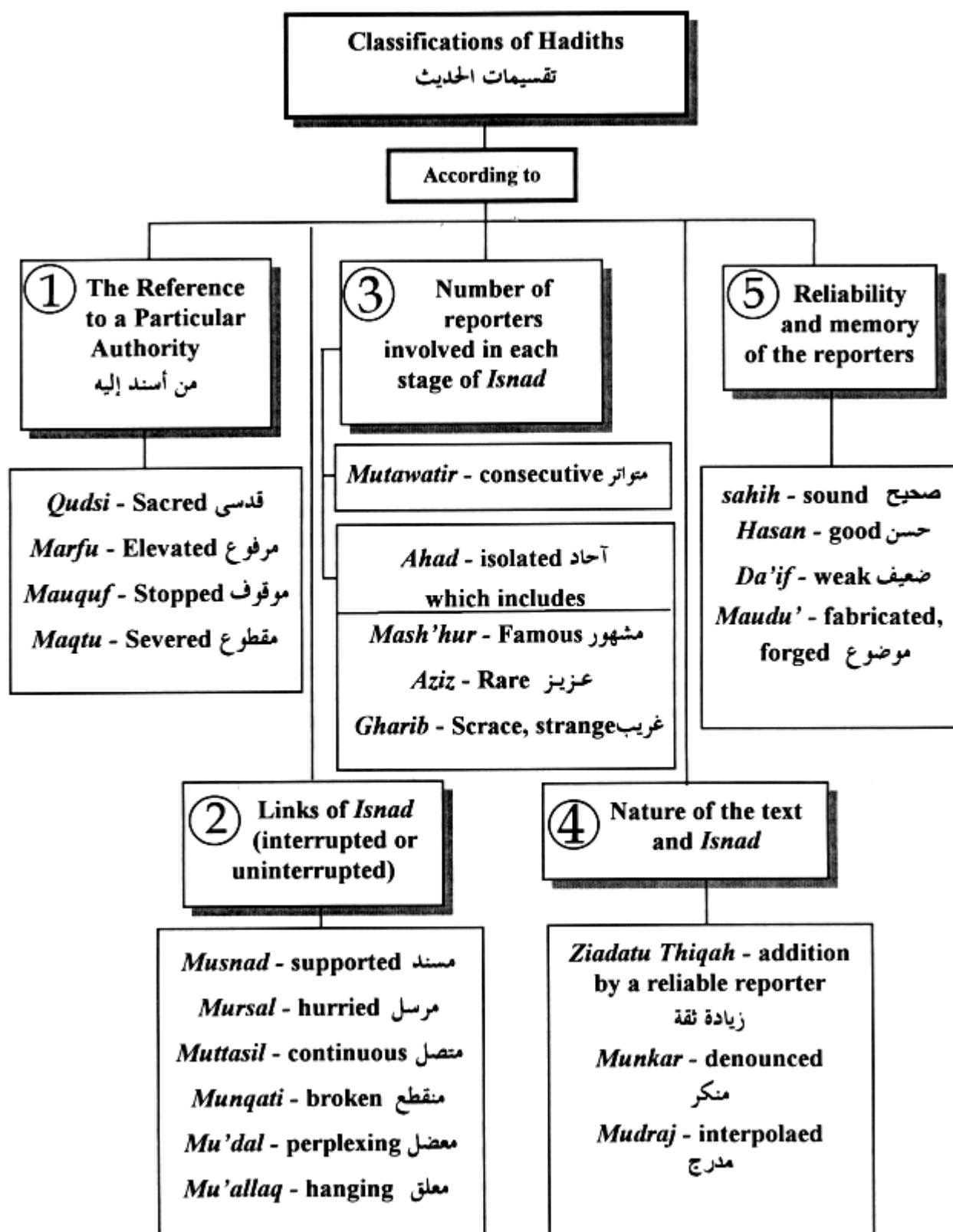
A hadith is composed of three parts (see the figure [below]):



Matn (text), **isnad** (chain of reporters), and **taraf** (the part, or the beginning sentence, of the text which refers to the sayings, actions or characteristics of the Prophet^(P), or his concurrence with others action). The authenticity of the hadith depends on the reliability of its reporters, and the linkage among them.

Classifications Of Hadith

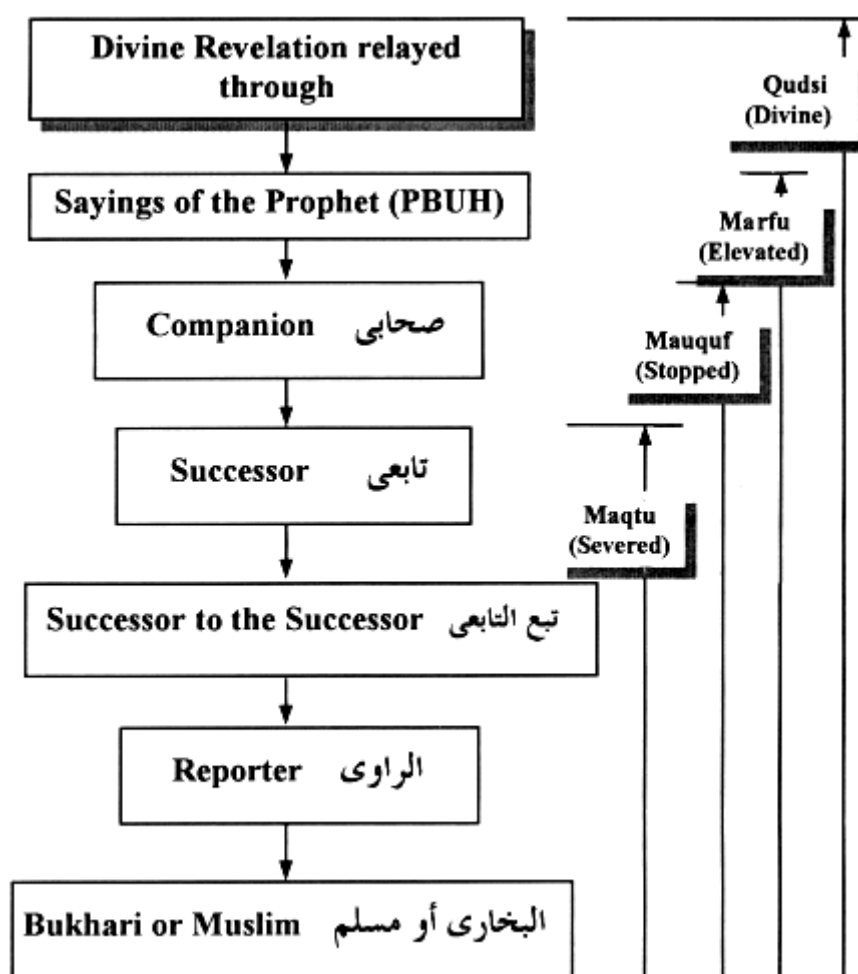
A number of classifications of hadith have been made. Five of these classifications are shown in the figure [below], and are briefly described subsequently.



1. According to the reference to a particular authority

Four types of hadith can be identified.

- **Qudsi** - Divine; a revelation from Allah^(SWT); relayed with the words of the Prophet^(P).
- **Marfu`** - elevated; a narration from the Prophet^(P), e.g., I heard the Prophet^(P) saying ...
- **Mauquf**- stopped: a narration from a companion only, e.g., we were commanded to ...
- **Maqtu`** - severed: a narration from a successor.



2. According to the links of isnad - interrupted or uninterrupted

Six categories can be identified.

- **Musnad** - supported: a hadith which is reported by a traditionalist, based on what he learned from his teacher at a time of life suitable for learning; similarly - in turn - for each teacher until the **isnad** reaches a well known companion, who in turn, reports from the Prophet^(P).

- **Muttasīl** - continuous: a ḥadīth with an uninterrupted **isnad** which goes back only to a companion or successor.
- **Mursal** - hurried: if the link between the successor and the Prophet^(P) is missing, e.g., when a successor says "The Prophet said...".
- **Munqaṭi'** - broken: is a ḥadīth whose link anywhere before the successor (i.e., closer to the traditionalist recording the ḥadīth) is missing.
- **Mu`adal** - perplexing: is a ḥadīth whose reporter omits two or more consecutive reporters in the **isnad**.
- **Mu`allaq** - hanging: is a ḥadīth whose reporter omits the whole **isnad** and quotes the Prophet^(P) directly (i.e., the link is missing at the beginning).

3. According to the number of reporters involved in each stage of **isnad**

Five categories of ḥadīth can be identified:

- **Mutawatir** - Consecutive: is a ḥadīth which is reported by such a large number of people that they cannot be expected to agree upon a lie, all of them together.
- **Aḥad** - isolated: is a ḥadīth which is narrated by people whose number does not reach that of the mutawatir.

It is further classified into:

- **Mash'hur** - famous: ḥadīth reported by more than two reporters.
- **`Aziz** - rare, strong: at any stage in the **isnad**, only two reporters are found to narrate the ḥadīth.
- **Gharib** - strange: At some stage of the **isnad**, only one reporter is found relating it.

4. According to the nature of the text and **isnad**

- **Munkar** - denounced: is a ḥadīth which is reported by a weak narrator, and whose narration goes against another authentic ḥadīth.
- **Mudraj** - interpolated: an addition by a reporter to the text of the ḥadīth being narrated.

5. According to the reliability and memory of the reporters

This provides the final verdict on a ḥadīth - four categories can be identified:

- **Sahih** - sound. Imam al-Shafi'i states the following requirements for a hadith, which is not **Mutawatir**, to be acceptable "each reporter should be trustworthy in his religion; he should be known to be truthful in his narrating, to understand what he narrates, to know how a different expression can alter the meaning, and to report the wording of the hadith verbatim, not only its meaning".
- **Hasan** - good: is the one where its source is known and its reporters are unambiguous.
- **Da'if** - weak: a hadith which fails to reach the status of **Hasan**. Usually, the weakness is: a) one of discontinuity in the **isnad**, in which case the hadith could be - according to the nature of the discontinuity - **Munqati** (broken), **Mu'allaq** (hanging), **Mu'adal** (perplexing), or **Mursal** (hurried), or b) one of the reporters having a disparaged character, such as due to his telling lies, excessive mistakes, opposition to the narration of more reliable sources, involvement in innovation, or ambiguity surrounding his person.
- **Maudu'** - fabricated or forged: is a hadith whose text goes against the established norms of the Prophet's sayings, or its reporters include a liar. Fabricated hadith are also recognized by external evidence related to a discrepancy found in the dates or times of a particular incident.

Article 9:

Imam al-Bukhari and the Science of Hadith

Source: <http://lostislamichistory.com/imam-al-bukhari-and-the-science-of-hadith/>

In Islamic sciences, all knowledge of the religion comes back to two sources: the Quran and the sayings and doings of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ – the hadith. The Quran is of course considered the un-changed word of Allah as revealed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and is thus the foundation of all Islamic knowledge. Second after the Quran is the example set forth by the Prophet ﷺ.

But considering that he lived 1400 years ago, how can we be sure that the sayings and doings we attribute to him are real and unchanged? To someone unfamiliar with the science of hadith, the collections of hadith may seem unreliable and susceptible to corruption. However, due to the work of Imam Muhammad al-Bukhari in the 9th century, the science of hadith has been protected from such problems using a systematic and thorough method of verification for each and every saying attributed to the Prophet ﷺ. Thus, in the 21st century we can still benefit directly from the authentic sayings of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Al-Bukhari's Early Life



Imam al-Bukhari was born and raised in the city of Bukhara, in Central Asia

Abu Abdallah Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari was born in 809 or 810 in the city of Bukhara, in what is now Uzbekistan. He came from a Persian family that converted to Islam 3 generations before his time. Unfortunately for the young al-Bukhari, his father died while he was still an infant, leaving his upbringing to his mother. Despite the difficult circumstances, al-Bukhari dedicated himself to studying Islamic sciences from a young age.

Studying with the scholars in and around his hometown, al-Bukhari immersed himself in hadith studies as well as fiqh, Islamic jurisprudence. From a young age he showed a unique ability to understand complex issues of law, but more importantly, he was capable of remembering long and complex chains of narrations of hadiths. For a hadith to be considered authentic, a reliable chain of narrators is needed to connect that saying to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. In this, al-Bukhari excelled.

By his late teens, al-Bukhari had completed his studies in Bukhara and set out to Makkah to do Hajj (pilgrimage) with his mother and brother. Since the rise of Islam in the 600s, Makkah has been a unique mixing place for world travelers. Since all Muslims are obligated to complete the Hajj at least once, Makkah is constantly visited by people from all corners of the world. For a hadith scholar like al-Bukhari, this type of environment was invaluable.

He stayed in Makkah and Madinah for several years, where he continued to collect hadiths from some of the leading hadith scholars of the world, memorizing the text of the hadiths (the *matn*), the chain of narrators (the *isnad*), and advancing his understanding of the reliability of those narrators (the knowledge of men – *‘ilm al-rijaal*). He traveled through Egypt, Syria, and Iraq to continue his studies throughout his adult life, finally settling in Basra, where he would compile his monumental hadith collection.

Sahih al-Bukhari

Although Imam al-Bukhari authored several works on the science of hadith, his most lasting contribution to Islamic sciences was his compilation of over 7000 hadiths, which he called *al-Jaami’ al-Sahih al-Musnad al-Mukhtasar min Umur Rasool Allah wa sunanihi wa Ayyamihi*, meaning “The Abridged Collection of Authentic Hadith with Connected Chains regarding Matters Pertaining to the Prophet, His practices and His Times”. This collection took him 16 years to complete and since its compilation has been considered the most authentic book of hadith in history, thus the book’s common name: *Sahih al-Bukhari* meaning “The Authentic Hadiths of al-Bukhari”.

What makes *Sahih al-Bukhari* so unique was Imam al-Bukhari’s meticulous attention to detail when it came to the compilation of hadiths. He had far stricter rules than other hadith scholars for accepting a hadith as authentic. The chain of narrators for a particular hadith had to be verified as authentic and reliable before Imam al-Bukhari would include that hadith in his compilation. For example, the first hadith in the book begins:

“We have heard from al-Humaydi Abdallah ibn al-Zubayr who said that he heard from Sufyan, who said he heard from Yahya ibn Sa’eed al-Ansari who said he was informed by Muhammad ibn Ibrahim al-Taymi that he

heard ‘Alqama ibn Waqqas al-Laythi say that he heard ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab say on the sermon pulpit that he heard the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ say: ‘Actions are only by intentions...’”

This chain of six narrators was meticulously inspected by Imam al-Bukhari. In order for him to consider the hadith authentic, he had to study the lives of all the people in the chain in depth. He studied where and when the narrators lived, in order to make sure that if someone narrates from someone else, they must both have been in the same place at the same time and have actually met and discussed hadith. Other hadith scholars did not all require evidence that two consecutive narrators met personally, but Imam al-Bukhari’s strict requirements is what makes his compilation unique.

Imam al-Bukhari also studied the lives of narrators, to make sure they were trustworthy and would not fabricate, or change the wording of a hadith. If he discovered that someone in a chain openly sinned or was not considered trustworthy, that hadith was immediately discarded and not included in his book unless a stronger chain for it existed.

Using his strict guidelines for hadith acceptance, Imam al-Bukhari was the first to make a systematic approach to classifying hadith. Each hadith he analyzed was labelled as either *sahih* (authentic), *hasan* (good), *mutawatir* (recurrent in many chains), *ahad* (solitary), *da’eef* (weak), or *mandu’* (fabricated). This system for hadith then became the standard by which all hadiths were classified by other hadith scholars.

Imam al-Bukhari’s Fiqh

Imam al-Bukhari’s collection of hadiths is a monumental achievement and an irreplaceable cornerstone of the science of hadith scholarship. Through his work, hadith studies became a science with governing laws that protected the field from innovations and corruptions. However, his *Sahih* is not just a simple collection of hadiths. Al-Bukhari organized his collection in a way that it can also be used to help deduce rulings within Islamic law – fiqh.

The *Sahih* is divided into 97 books, each with numerous chapters within it. Each chapter is then titled with a ruling on a particular issue within fiqh. Then within the chapter will be all the hadiths that he considered authentic that support that ruling. For example, the chapter about extra prayer during the month of Ramadan (Taraweeh) is titled “The Superiority of Extra Prayers at Night in Ramadan” and it contains six sayings of the Prophet ﷺ that indicate how important the Taraweeh prayer is.

Thus, not only is *Sahih al-Bukhari* the most authentic book of hadith ever compiled, but Imam al-Bukhari also had the foresight to organize it into a book of law that helps everyday Muslims live

their lives as close to the life of the Prophet ﷺ as possible. His monumental work would go to inspire generations of hadith scholars, including al-Bukhari's student Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, who would go on to collect *Sahih Muslim*, which is considered second only to *Sahih al-Bukhari* in authenticity.

One of the common accusations made by non-Muslims against Islamic sciences and the study of hadith is that there is no way of verifying the hadith and that they should not be used as a source of belief or law. This argument is based on a very rudimentary and flawed understanding of how the hadith were collected and the incredible amount of effort scholars such as al-Bukhari put into verifying their authenticity. With the monumental work of al-Bukhari and other scholars of hadith, we have been able to know what words and actions can truly be attributed to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ even 1400 years after his life.

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